

AUSTRALIAN AND BRITISH

SOCER



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WEEKLY

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SOCER WEEKLY

AUSSIE & BRITISH SOCCER WEEKLY

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*Fax 02 98777888

*Write to Bruce McAvaney at PO Box Epping, NSW 2121

Remember, Soccer won the survey for most popular football code in their recent Net site poll.

JOEYS SURVIVE SCARE TO WIN FIRST QUALIFIER

FIJI
Marika 20 pen
AUSTRALIA
Brain 50, Iorio 53

McDonald was parried by the keeper onto the crossbar.

A double substitution by coach Scheinflug three minutes later saw the introduction of Werder Bremen youngster Joe di Iorio, who was to provide Australia's winner with his first touch.

Di Iorio broke through the defence to take a shot from just inside the box and hit the back of the net in the 53rd minute, to put Australia one up in the first of its five group matches.

"Mark Byrnes played very solidly and I would say he was best on ground, despite the fact that he gave away a penalty," said Scheinflug after the game.

"Other boys to play well were Radoslav Culibrk at right wingback, who had a very solid game, as did Wayne Srhoj, and Lucas Pantelis in the second half."

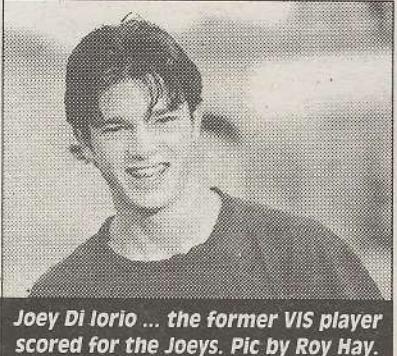
"Overall, the team played very well considering the extremely muddy conditions, and I think the nerves of an opening game also played a part in their slow start."

"I believe they will improve tremendously though - the surface was very slippery, it's very hot and humid, they've never been in conditions quite like this before but they played a very good second half."

Australia: Milosevic Culibrk, Cansdell-Sherriff, Goulding, Byrnes, Lockhart, North (Di Iorio 53), Srhoj, Pantelis, Brain, McDonald (MacAllister 53')

The Joeys went behind before coming back to win 2-1 over Fiji in their first Oceania World Cup qualifier.

The Joeys, who need to win this tournament in order to progress on the path to the World Cup later this year, went down a goal in the 20th minute when defender Mark Byrnes conceded a penalty.



Joey Di Iorio ... the former VIS player scored for the Joeys. Pic by Roy Hay.

The Under-17s hit back shortly after half-time however, Adelaide City's Louis Brain heading the ball into the back of the net from a rebound after the initial shot from Scott

CLASH OF THE GIANTS

By Dwight Tuffnell

South Melbourne takes its first step this weekend in an attempt to win back-to-back championships. The first leg of the Major Semi-Final pits the experienced South Melbourne finalists against the relatively inexperienced Sydney United.

There appears to be little between the two sides. Each recorded tight, 1-0 home wins during the regular season and South coach, Ange Postecoglou, thinks the tie will go right down to the wire.

"I'll be very surprised if there is a clear winner after the first leg" Postecoglou said.

"It could even be decided late in the second game. There's not much between them and ourselves. Finals are a whole different ball game. There's a lot of other factors that come in to it. It's a lot more tactical than on a week-to-week basis where three points is what you're after."

The carrot dangling in front of the two teams is a home Grand Final.



Minor Premiers Sydney United.

"The home Grand Final is a huge incentive. Our record at Olympic Park (where the Grand Final will be played should South get through) has been good over the last three years" said Postecoglou.

Postecoglou, respectful and wary of what Sydney United under David Mitchell have done this season, says that his side have one thing over their opponents — finals experience.

"Our players know what is required when it comes to finals, they (Sydney United) may not, the majority of their players haven't played in matches as big as this."

"They've got some experience there, I'm sure 'Mitch' will be

telling them all the right things."

Sydney United's remarkable season has caught many by surprise and it is their team spirit that Postecoglou sees as their biggest strength.

"They have a close bond between the players and coach, they're prepared to work hard for each other and they don't rely on individual brilliance, they're just strong as a team."

Postecoglou, with a full squad to choose from, said that the players were confident going into the games against United.

"It's what we've been building ourselves up for, another crack at the title."

"We missed the minor premiership which was disappointing but getting the double chance was important."

"They don't hold any fears for any other team in the top six. The players get genuinely excited when the finals come around, they're looking forward to it," concluded Postecoglou.

And why wouldn't you, with the added incentive of a place in the World Club Championship, this top six series has greater significance, and cachet, than any other in the NSL history.

* All South Melbourne fans are invited to watch the team train on Thursday nights during the finals series (from 6pm onwards).

There will be a sausage sizzle held and supporters will have the opportunity to get player autographs and purchase tickets and club merchandise.

And on match day this Sunday, there will be flowers for all Mothers to celebrate Mothers Day, and children's activities, including jumping castles, face painting and balloons will also feature.

AUSTRALIAN

Soccer School

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AUSOCS is the first Australian soccer school (est. 1997) incorporating VCE studies or VET qualification (AQF) with the soccer program.

SCHOLARSHIPS PLAYER'S AGENT

TOP SIX ELIMINATION FINAL SECOND LEG

AT THE

MARCONI STADIUM

KICK-OFF 5 PM

SUNDAY MAY 9

DON'T MISS THIS!

northern
spirit
fc.

MARCONI

vs



NORTHERN SPIRIT



Australian News

THIS TIME FOR ORLIC?

By Dwight Tuffnell

South Melbourne's Nick Orlic has an extra motivation to get to and win this season's Ericsson Cup Grand Final.

The 28 year old defender may have a championship medal from last season but it's almost as though he feels he didn't earn it.

He, along with Vaughan Coveny and Michael Curcija missed out on playing their part in South's Grand Final glory against Carlton.

"There was a few us who missed out, we watched the game from the sidelines on the bench" explains the former Parramatta Eagles and Sydney Olympic defender.

"We were happy that we'd won it of course, but we didn't feel that we'd made our contribution to the victory."

"Hopefully, that can be rectified this year and we can help the club to another championship."

At a club with a strong squad like South Melbourne, there is always bound to be someone disappointed that they aren't selected in a big game.

It happened last season and, should South make the Grand Final, it will most probably happen again but Orlic says that he learned from the experience.

"To be honest, it was hard to take. It was probably the toughest thing I've been through in my footballing career but I've benefited from it."

"I've probably grown from it and become a stronger person."

This week, Orlic and South take on Sydney

"They (Sydney United) played well against us up in Sydney, we've got a point to prove to everybody that we are the best club." **Nick Orlic.**

are judged on how many goals we concede, and we haven't let too many in" he said.

"Other than two games, in which we conceded nine goals, we've only been letting in one or two goals here and there, we've worked very hard this year, the boys at the back."

Goalkeeper Michael Petkovic has been in sparkling form when called upon, but the defence has had an air of strength about it that was seemingly missing when they won the title last season.

"We've been concentrating a lot more back there" says Orlic of the back-line.

"Last year the emphasis was more on attack, this year we've settled in and we understand that we need a strong basis in defence as well as attack."



Nick Orlic (top third from left) with South Melbourne at the controversial match at Marconi earlier this year. They lost that day 5-3.

United in the first leg of the Major Semi-Final, two games that Orlic says are going to test South.

"They're going to be tough games. Finals are a different brand of football, we definitely know what finals are all about and we know what we're going to be up against."

Orlic, well aware of the danger that United front-men Mile Sterjovski, Joel Griffiths and Nathan Day pose, says that the team as a whole must work together to stop United playing their game.

"They sit behind the ball well. They're hard to break down and they play on the counter, so we've got to be careful of that."

"If you get sucked in with too many players up forward they're able to break very well and can cause some problems."

The prize for South and Orlic, should they get past Sydney United, is a home Grand Final to be played at Olympic Park.

"It's important for us to get the Grand Final. We like to play at home and we want to get

"You can't always be scoring goals so we've learnt to concentrate more and do the simple things in the right areas. Last year we used to give the ball away in stupid areas and concede some stupid goals."

"This year, we've concentrated on not giving the ball away in those areas."

Orlic says there is no reason why South can't go on and win back-to-back titles.

"Any of those 20 players can be relied on to come in and do a job. We've had a lot of injuries and suspensions this year and the players who have come in have made big contributions and not let anyone down."

Orlic, desperate to play in the Grand Final after last year's disappointment, knows that this finals series has taken on extra importance for the Lakeside club.

"I think we've got a lot more to play for this year than we did last year. Going back-to-back is something the club hasn't done before."

"The boys know exactly what is ahead of them."

Literary world lauds Souris

After we published Paul Souris' evocative work in last week's issue, we were inundated with calls from readers who were both moved and emotionally washed out after reading this allegory. So we decided to seek a professional's opinion on our Ericsson Cup poet.

Professor David N. Melbury, from the Institute of Literary Studies and Modern Culture in Auckland was given the work, and he E-mailed us back with his views.

"A finely balanced piece that evokes both pathos and hope. Although Souris has neglected the epiphanic possibility of Dionysian transcendence that is equally critical to Nietzsche, his insight is rare; Beckettsian notions of loneliness are mixed with post-modern views and an almost Foucaultian aspect to the state, as represented by the Adelaide Sharks hierarchy."

"When he speaks of 'getting pissed on the right stuff', he is taking the Right in politics as its metaphor, and the free market approach as a warning to the workers' game; soccer, and its relation to the ideals of socialism. We should not get drunk on the Right's ideology, it is not the panacea we are looking for, he seems to be saying."

"Moral issues are covered in the lines 'it felt like the Sharks were swimming without a fin'. Are we drowning in a sea of hedonism and moral bankruptcy? Perhaps, especially as Sharks are considered the most hedonistic of all the mammals."

"Further, he alludes to Social Darwinism theories when he gracefully explores the future of NSL clubs. 'Thank God the season has come to an end, because it sure drove us around the bend,' borrows heavily from the philosophy of Darwin, in terms of the clubs in the NSL and who will survive."

"Is the fin on the back a metaphor for the weight of social expectation that many of our sports stars must endure?"

"Survival of the fittest?"

"Perhaps, but with Souris' work, we have a bright future with the exciting conflation of Australian literature and Australian Soccer."

Paul Souris ... Ericsson Cup poet from the Adelaide Sharks



THE YEAR OF THE SHARKS

We swam together from coast to coast
To form a team for our club to boast.
When we started the year
We had a team that had no fear
We started out of sight
When the Sharks attacked we would bite
We circled our prey day or night
Making sure our defence was tight.
Then the Sharks started to drown
And the supporters started to frown.
We couldn't score we had no luck
And other teams started running amuck.
Except for Wollongong we drilled them five-nil
That was the team's biggest thrill.
Trouble started within the club
And the players started hitting the pub
One or two was never enough
We got pissed on the right stuff.
The bills kept rolling in
It felt like the Sharks were swimming without a fin.
We all started gambling to make some money
'But when we lost it wasn't funny.
The debts were getting bigger and bigger
A few of the boys almost pulled the trigger.
Thank God the season has come to an end
Because it sure drove us around the bend.
Next year we will be back to win
Just remember: BEWARE OF THE FIN.

PAUL SOURIS, Adelaide Sharks.

JOEYS SQUAD IN FIJI

NAME	AGE	D-O-B	POSITION	CLUB
1. MILOSEVIC Matthew	16	29.10.1982	Goalkeeper	SASI (Australia)
2. CULIBRK Radoslav	16	14.07.1982	Defender	Springvale White Eagles (Aus)
3. CANSDELL-SHEFFIELD Shane	16	10.11.1982	Defender	NSWIS (Australia)
4. GOULDING Aaron	16	29.04.1982	Defender	SASI (Australia)
5. LAURIE Steven	16	13.10.1982	Defender	West Ham (UK)
6. BYRNES Mark	17	08.02.1982	Defender	NSWIS (Australia)
7. NORTH Jade	17	07.01.1982	Midfielder	AIS/Brisbane Strikers (Australia)
8. BRAIN Louis	16	09.05.1982	Striker	Adelaide City (Australia)
9. DI IORIO Joseph	17	08.04.1982	Striker	Werder Bremen (Germany)
10. PANTELIS Lucas	17	12.03.1982	Midfielder	AIS (Australia)
11. McDONALD Scott	15	21.08.1983	Striker	VIS/Gippsland Falcons (Australia)
12. LOCKHART Shane	16	26.09.1982	Defender	NSWIS (Australia)
13. SRHOJ Wayne	17	23.03.1982	Midfielder	AIS/Brisbane Strikers (Australia)
14. JOHNSON James	16	21.05.1982	Midfielder	QAS (Australia)
15. DOUMANIS Anthony	17	01.02.1982	Midfielder	NSWIS (Australia)
16. LETTIERI Fabian	16	07.09.1982	Midfielder	Werder Bremen (Germany)
17. MacALLISTER Dylan	16	17.05.1982	Striker	NSWIS (Australia)
18. KEDWELL-VANSTRATTAN Jess	16	19.07.1982	Goalkeeper	NSWIS (Australia)
19. FYFE Iain	17	03.04.1982	Defender	SASI (Australia)
20. SARIC Mislav	15	03.09.1983	Midfielder	SASI (Australia)

Australia's draw is:

Wednesday 5 May

Australia vs Cook Islands Kick-off: 7.00pm (Fiji) 5.00pm (Australian EST)

Friday 7 May

Australia vs American Samoa Kick-off: 1.30pm (Fiji) 11.30am (Australian EST)

Monday 10 May

Australia vs Vanuatu Kick-off: 3.00pm (Fiji) 1.00pm (Australian EST)

Wednesday 12 May

Winner Pool 1 vs Runner-up Pool 2 + Winner Pool vs Runners-up Pool 1

Friday 14 May 1999

3rd vs 4th play-off + FINAL

Australian News

WORLD FANTASY IN AUSTRALIA

KLINSMANN THE WILD CARD IN STAR-STUDDED PACK

FIFA has named a powerful 32 man provisional squad for its showpiece game against the Socceroos to officially open Stadium Australia on Saturday June 12 in Sydney.

Despite the absence of Ronaldo, Michael Owen and Alan Shearer, plus Greek and Croatian stars such as Machias and Soker, there is a dizzying array on way to play for FIFA.

The squad will be reduced to 18 in a few weeks.

One interesting selection is retired German striker Jürgen Klinsmann, who is currently residing in Florida, who only recently turned up at a training session for the US national team.

Another is dynamic Ukraine striker Andrei Shevchenko, a very skilful and powerful performer during the Champions League campaign for his club Dynamo Kiev, and, of course, Italy's power striker Christian Vieri, who grew up only 20ks from the stadium.

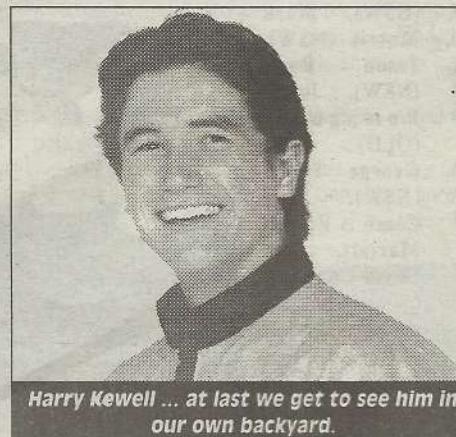
World player of the year, Zinedine Zidane, will lead the attack.

Even allowing for injuries and unavailability, there is a very good chance that the side will still be packed with star power, which is something our Australian team itself is not short of.

Harry Kewell, Mark Bosnich, Paul Okon, Mark Viduka, John Aloisi, Ned Zelic and Stan Lazaridis play their football at the highest strata.

Such is our squad that even at this early stage, a Socceroo victory is infinitely possible.

Will both coaches use as many players as possible?



Harry Kewell ... at last we get to see him in our own backyard.

Will that detract from the game as a whole? Whatever happens, it will be fun trying to pick the respective starting line-ups from the announced squads.

Who knows, but one thing is for certain, with the entertainment extravaganza from local acts and overseas, the stadium itself and the talent on the park, this will be one of our nation's biggest ever nights. Only qualifying for the World Cup will better this for Australia wide interest.

The game will also be played during the rugby league state of origin series, a perfect time to contrast the two sports' showpieces. Looks like soccer will dominate the media this time around.

Such is our squad that even at this early stage, a Socceroo victory is infinitely possible.

Will both coaches use as many players as possible?



HARRY KEWELL
MARK BOSNICH
MARK VIDUKA
ZELJKO KALAC
PAUL OKON
NED ZELIC
STAN LAZARIDIS
JOHN ALOISI
HAYDEN FOXE
ALEX TOBIN

AUSTRALIA

KEVIN MUSCAT
TONY POPOVIC
SIMON COLOSIMO
TONY VIDMAR
AURELIO VIDMAR
BRETT EMERTON
VINCE GRELLA
JOSIP SKOKO
CRAIG FOSTER
STEVE CORICA

FIFA WORLD ALL STARS

ANDREW KOPKE (GERMANY)
BERNARD LAMA (FRANCE)
CARLOS ROA (ARGENTINA)
LAURENT BLANC (FRANCE)
JULIO CESAR (BRAZIL)
ALESSANDRO COSTACURTA (ITALY)
MARCEL DESAILLY (FRANCE)
HADJI EL MOUSTAFA (MOROCCO)
CARLOS GAMARRA (PARAGUAY)
FERNANDO HIERRO (SPAIN)
RIGOBERT SONG (CAMEROON)
FRANK VERLAAT (HOLLAND)
TARIBO WEST (NIGERIA)
AARON WINTER (HOLLAND)
GABRIEL BATISTUTA (ARGENTINA)
DAVID BECKHAM (ENGLAND)
ALESSANDRO DEL PIERO (ITALY)
YOUSSI DJORKAFF (FRANCE)
LUIS FIGO (PORTUGAL)
RYAN GIGGS (WALES)
JURGEN KLINSMANN (GERMANY)
LEONARDO (BRAZIL)
HIDETOSHI NAKATA (JAPAN)
RAUL (SPAIN)
FERNANDO REDONDO (ARGENTINA)
CIRIACO SFORZA (SWITZERLAND)
ANDREI SHEVCHENKO (UKRAINE)
JUAN VERON (ARGENTINA)
CHRISTIAN VIERI (ITALY)
GEORGE WEAH (LIBERIA)
DWIGHT YORKE (TRINIDAD & TOBAGO)
ZINEDINE ZIDANE (FRANCE)



Batistuta ... named in the provisional 32 man squad by FIFA. Wonder how Beckham will get on with him?

LFS HITS SIX WITH SOCCER EXTRAVAGANZA

Cricket legend Dean Jones is not a name one would normally associate with soccer. Yet he does have an eye for business and, together with other high profile sports identities from the Left Field Solutions Sports Event Management company, is serving up the largest and most sumptuous array of soccer dishes yet seen in Australia.

Speaking at a media luncheon last week, Jones, the 1987 World Cup player (won by Australia) and scorer of 210 runs in the famous 1986 tied Test in Madras, said that although the FIFA game was the first time Left Field Solutions had been involved in soccer, he hopes it is not the last.

"Soccer has a huge potential, that we know, and Left Field Solutions, is keen on putting on quality international events that cater for the massive audience soccer now has."

Other directors at LFS include former South Melbourne and Australian soccer international George Christopoulos, who is a graduate of the Canberra university BA Sports Marketing and Administration while attending the Australian Institute of Sport in its inaugural years. He is a holder of FIFA Players' Agent Licence.

Also on board is former Chief Executive of the ACB, Graeme Halbush, who successfully organised, managed and promoted the 1992 Cricket World Cup.

Jones stressed the need for fans to arrive early.

"I guess in Melbourne there is this tradition of getting to the ground early, getting your seat and making sure you are all organised so you can fully enjoy the day," advised Jones.

"This FIFA All-Star game will be that. The entertainment will be incredible, certainly better than the pre-match at an AFL Grand Final, with some huge names being on show," added the former Test batsman.

The doors to the Stadium Australia will open at 4pm, show at 6.30pm and the game will start at 8.30pm. Some of the acts appearing will be Men at Work, Jane Scali and Rob Guest. There will be further announcements on the entertainment component of the night later this week.

CANTERBURY MARRICKVILLE OLYMPIC SOCCER CLUB

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Australian News



Singing sensations Wayne Knipe and Snoop Doggy Dog cross paths. Knipe currently has a record contract with FRS in Brisbane and played in Snoop's support act on his recent tour.



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SOCCER

Students will be selected on merit. Students are required to demonstrate outstanding achievement or potential in sport, a sound academic record and a positive attitude to school. The closing date for applications is 7th June 1999.

Endeavour Sports High School welcomes prospective students and their parents to Open Night Wednesday 19th May 1999, 5.30pm to 8.30pm.

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Fax: 9540-4458

PARALYMPIC SOCCER STARS GOING FOR GOLD

By Craig Wilson

While last week's announcement of the Australian squad, and the World XI to play at Stadium Australia was big news, a press release naming the first football training squad for the Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games probably went to the bottom of most sports editors' pigeon-holes.

As Bronwyn Campbell, Communications Manager at the Australian Paralympic Committee told Soccer Weekly, 'You've pretty much got an exclusive on this one.'

The Paralympics is the world's second largest sporting competition, is bigger than the Commonwealth Games or the World Cup, and will 4000 sports people from 127 countries to Sydney.

There are 18 sports on the Games calendar, and next year Australia will compete for the first time in the strongest soccer tournament yet.

Qualifying as host nation, they will take on the best seven teams in the world including 1998 World Champions, the Ukraine. 1998 World Championship runners-up, Russia and 1996 Paralympic Games Gold Medallists, The Netherlands.

The Paralympic Football Tournament will be played from 21-29 October 2000 on the Olympic Hockey Pitch at the State Hockey Centre, Homebush Bay.

Two pools of four teams will play each other in a round robin, with the top two teams in each pool progressing to the semi finals and medal games.

Footballers with cerebral palsy from six states recently gathered at



the Sydney Academy of Sport at Narabeen for the first training camp.

The 12 man Australian Soccer Squad selected at the camp included Patrick Grant (NSW), Edward Sharp (NSW), Beau Menzies (QLD), Jeremy Thorpe (QLD), Jason Driscoll (ACT), David Barber (QLD), Andrew Higgins (VIC), Christopher Pyne (NSW), Mark Morris (NSW), Jason Rand (NSW), Jamie Romagura (QLD) and George Tonna (NSW). Head Coach is Russell Mariott, with David Campbell his assistant, and the Team Manager is Cornelis Van Eldik.

Cerebral palsy is a disorder of movement and posture caused by damage to an area or areas of the developing brain that control and coordinate muscle tone, reflexes, posture and movement. It is a condition, not a disease, and is non-fatal, non-contagious, non-progressive and non-curable.

As Paralympic High Performance Manager Ross Boyd told Soccer Weekly, 'One in eleven people have cerebral palsy, and we hope that the awareness raised by this team will encourage more athletes with cerebral palsy to play soccer.

"Many are playing regularly in able-bodied competitions, and an immediate challenge for

2000 is to identify more soccer players with cerebral palsy who have the ability to represent Australia."

One of the stars of the squad, David Barber, plays A grade for Southside United in Rockhampton, Queensland. Currently studying for his BA in Health at Central Queensland Uni, Barber was excited at the prospect of competing next year. "It doesn't get much



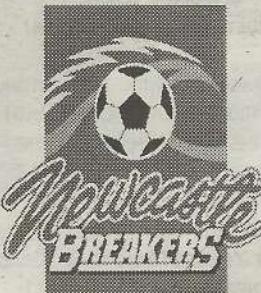
Going for Soccer Gold and Glory ... our 2000 Paralympic Soccer stars.

better than representing your country at a Paralympic games," he told Soccer Weekly. "It's a once in a lifetime opportunity. It will be great."

The next training camp will take place in Narabeen in late May, and Soccer Weekly will be there to check on the progress of Australia's elite Paralympic soccer players.

With many players having to travel interstate, and raising their own funds, sponsorship is always needed. Anyone wishing to help The Australian Paralympic Committee Soccer Squad should contact the Australian Paralympic Committee on (02) 9245 2555.

BREAKERS ON THE GOLD COAST



By Aidan Ormond

A football team on their end of season 'bonding' session on the Gold Coast? The words every hotel, motel and bar owner on the tourist mecca must dread!

Thankfully Newcastle Breakers have maintained the NSL's clean image with an incident free four days on the Coast following their final Ericsson Cup game against Brisbane Strikers.

The players were there to wind down after their long season, a season that has seen them gain nation wide respect and almost sneak into the top six.

Was Mark Wilson naked in a nightclub? Tom Haythornthwaite arrested for indecent exposure? Well, as Breakers' immaculate defender and captain Shane Pryce, 25, explained, it was all just good clean fun.

"Look, we tend to stick together, so if one of us is getting a bit overboard, we tend to pull his head in," said a coy Pryce on his return to Williamtown airport in Newcastle.

"So no Julian O'Neill stories here. Even though we stayed right in the middle of Surfers Paradise we just enjoyed taking a break."

"It was fantastic. We are a close bunch of blokes and we enjoy each other's company, but no, to answer your question, nothing to get excited about. Everyone just letting their hair down, even Lee (Sterrey) was there, but no-one tarnished our image."

So no 'Breakers Break up the Gold Coast' headlines; although all the headlines this year have been on the remarkable job rookie coach Lee Sterrey has done with his 'Budget Breakers.'

With the side earning the highest amount of points ever in their NSL history (40), with the third best defence in the league, it has been a breakthrough campaign.

Pryce has been integral in the centre of the defence, although he is keen to let the team take the bouquets.

"Yeah, I think I can look back on this season with pride. I don't like to talk about myself, but I think players like myself, and a few others, may have matured a little bit."

"We have been battling away for the last 3-4 years and maybe it's these guys just maturing and being better players for it," explains Pryce.

"I think the key has been the number of mistakes we have made. We have cut down on errors, which is something that may have cost us in the past."

As for his future, Pryce is realistic and believes that, although he is very close to the Newcastle people and the area ("I'll always be a Newy boy") money is important, particularly if it means full-time football.

"I work 40 hrs a week at my day job, but I would love just to be paid enough to play soccer. How good would that be?"

Pryce would be a very handy acquisition at the centre of any Ericsson Cup defence, yet the Breakers will no doubt want him to come back next season.

So would the hotel in Surfers.

*Look out for Soccer Weekly's food review coming soon. We will review your restaurant,

bar, etc. First on the list is 'Buonavoglia on Ramsay'.

Coincidentally this pizzeria and bar is owned and run by Newcastle Breakers' brilliant little striker, John Buonavoglia. Buon appetite!



Shane Pryce ... "No Julian O'Neill incidents on the Cold Ghost, just good clean fun!"

Australian Features

The Changing Face of Australian Soccer...

The Fans' Perspective

By Ben Cubby

The vast floodlights of Marconi stadium tower above their suburb like beacons, promising fine football and a unique, cosmopolitan atmosphere.

On a Sunday evening, along with ten thousand others, I was drawn to their light. Marconi, traditionally one of the greatest clubs in the country, were hosting Northern Spirit, a vibrant newcomer to the league.

I arrived at the ground with the aim of exploring the contrasts between these two rivals and discussing the future of Australian club soccer with fans of both sides.

"Marconi are the same as all the other ethnic clubs", said Jeff, a Spirit supporter from Sydney's inner west. "It's the same old story: people who aren't from their particular ethnic group don't feel at home here."

"They can't get the crowds that we can because they alienate anyone who isn't Italian."

Stefano, a committed Marconi fan, naturally disagrees. "The perception is that Marconi is an ethnic club, but we are more a reflection of the diversity of our local area. I think that the club is going in the right direction, but sometimes we could spend our money better."

Like many others, he felt that the ethnic stigmas in soccer cannot be removed until wider social prejudices are addressed.

"We would get much bigger crowds if the club was closer to public transport", he said.

A carnival atmosphere prevailed throughout the game. Fireworks above the ground mirrored those on the pitch, and the Stallionettes demonstrated their admirable flexibility at half-time.

"This is a good place for watching soccer" said one young Spirit fan. "You can see the players much better than at North Sydney and you are much closer to what's going on".

Marie, a Spirit follower who had travelled for two hours to get to the game, also thought that the design of Marconi stadium helped to create an exciting atmosphere.

"The venue is good but I think it is sad that most of the cheering is for the away team," she noted.

"If you took the Spirit fans out of this stadium it would be almost silent. At least we know how to support our team".

Tony, a Spirit fan from the north shore, thought that "the atmosphere is as good as North Sydney Oval, but Spirit are generally more innovative in their entertainment". His views were shared by many of the visiting supporters, but all of them stressed that football was always the main attraction.

"The other lot think they are number one", said Daniella, a fiercely loyal Stallions fan.

"But we have been coming here all our lives and they have only been

around for a little while". George, a long time member of the Marconi club, echoed Daniella's sentiments.

"We have seen this club built up from nothing, and we have stayed with it always. They say that the Northern Spirit have the crowds and are a strong club, but we have something they do not have: we have the tradition.

"You look at our many young players and also the young fans and you will have to say that we are also a very progressive club".

Simon, a regular at North Sydney Oval, doesn't think that the lack of a long tradition at Northern Spirit is a problem.

"Most of us at Spirit are soccer people who had been waiting for the right club to come along. I keep meeting people on the terraces who I haven't seen for years. I think that a sort of underground football movement is coming to the surface".

Brazilian dancers and drummers added their rhythm to the scene behind the goals, which was already throbbing.

"This amount of noise is unusual" said Victor, a long-time Marconi supporter. "The Spirit fans have their chants and songs, but tonight I think we are rising to their challenge. I think the passion of football is a wonderful thing".

As the crowd filed out through the turnstiles, I asked one after the match neutral spectator what he thought of the game. "It was a shocker" he said, "but I'll be back next time."

MATCH DAY PROGRAMMES: WHY THE FANS WANT THEM

By Ashley Hyne

Did you know Clayton Zane's nickname at Spirit is Clacker? You would have if you had been buying the Spirit match day programme.

A short while ago no one gave a brass razoo for soccer programmes in Australia.

But times change and there is now a satisfied demand for information only soccer supporters seem to enjoy knowing.

The public are suddenly being fed information such as who Northern Spirit's Ian Crook would invite to his perfect party (one of which is a case of chilled Heineken) in much the same way that they are made aware as to what Ante Juric's favourite Nintendo game is.

Whether this is contributing to our understanding of 'the game' is questionable but Soccer Australia did decree that each NSL

side produce a programme and those choice facts demonstrate that some clubs seem to have embraced the concept more readily than others.

Perth Glory's programme — generally considered to be the nation's best — reflects the professional health of their organisation and consequently other clubs have decided to invest great interest in their productions.

Enter the editors. A small group of dedicated sports freaks who have their club's supporters firmly in mind when they prepare their week's work. These are the guys in the enviable position of having soccer careers. They get to rub shoulders with the Hendersons and Cardozos of this world.

However, all is not sweetness and light. After all what exactly do the fans want? More's to the point who are the fans? What about the printers? To mention nothing of the club budget?

Not surprisingly clubs try to bring the programmes to us in devious ways.

At Spirit, for instance, there are the famous white-coated butcher boys with all their chirpy chat. They are a key feature of Spirit matches adding to the atmosphere at the ground. And it is a technique that has not escaped other clubs.

"Better selling techniques inside the ground will make us sell more," said Olympic's programme editor Dave Cooper, who head-hunted one of the Spirit sellers for the Spirit-Olympic clash at Belmore when Olympic sold out of that game's mag. "I have no doubts about that."

The most inventive 'sales' award of all must go to Marconi, who actually make a habit of selling out their programmes at most matches by printing off 1,500 and giving them away to fans on the proviso that the advertisers pay a set figure guaranteeing that they will get their messages out over the season.

"A friend said at the end of one game that you'd be lucky to find two or three lying about. Most of ours are taken home," said Ross Musso of Marconi.

"Clearly it isn't simply a case of putting the programmes in people's hands. The fans have got to want to read them, and Sydneysiders are notorious reluctant when it comes to buying them."

"The soccer programme culture exists amongst the Poms in Perth but it isn't quite so pervasive on the eastern seaboard, but saying that people are responding positively to ours all the same," said Ross.

"It is fair to say that with Spirit I was producing something for people who

didn't have that much experience with watching the NSL games. So it was hard to think of things that they wanted to read. A lot of them wouldn't have known about the players so that is what I tried first," said Glen Holloway at Spirit's programme.

But where does the reluctance come from in a club with a greater history and more traditional fan base? Like Olympic, for instance.

"I think there is a reluctance because of the price," commented Dave Cooper. "Thing is we aren't making any money on them but in previous seasons people got quite used to getting them for nothing and that doesn't work in the real world."

"I think for the budget we're working with we've got a first class programme."

But whether they are a famously fickle Olympic supporter or a Northern beaches surfie chick, spectators in Sydney are a tough bunch to satisfy at the best of times.

At Spirit the supporters club has put their weight behind of fanzine which attempts, in some way, to provide an outlet for disagreements they have with the club's programme and the club itself. Although, after the rookies broke attendance records and got to the play-offs you might be excused for thinking 'what's that all about?'

"You know people complain about the charge. Well to me you can't buy a middle for \$2 and I must say that some of the criticism that has come my way has made me wonder if it is justified. I put Michael Cockerill in [the Spirit programme] because I think that he's the best soccer writer in Australia. I did that because I wanted a column devoted not just to Spirit but to Australian and International Soccer."

"I had a chat with some of the supporters and they told me that they wanted players profiles. Now I'll swallow my pride, I'm not afraid of that. If I hear something that I think will work, I'll run with it," said Glen.

In fact player profiles appeared to be the compulsory inclusion in most editor's minds. Sometimes at the expense of other equally important material.

"If I do this again I would definitely include articles from the youth coach (Gary van Egmond) and the Colts. That was a mistake not including it," said Glen.

No such problem at Marconi who heeded divine notice on the issue.

"Raul Blanco came up to me and said how the f— do I know who's coming on the park off the bench. So that's why we introduced that," explained Ross.

Recent financial upheavals have lead to Sydney United hanging out their washing on the Hills Hoist. The situation was so ugly that Dave Mitchell had to scrape pocket money to get a bus to training.

Is it an unnecessary burden for the clubs to be obliged by the governing body to produce a programme?

"We are in the entertainment industry and it is important to inform the public of what we are doing and what we are providing for them. I have no time for those who think differently. The programme is an important part of who we are," said Ross.

Last week's story on page 4
call 'The Night Rowdies met their
Match' was written by Ashley
Hyne and not Dwight Tuffnell.



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Australian Features

A NOW FAMILIAR GREEK TRAGEDY!

By Eva Loukas

New beginnings always bring with them fresh hopes and dreams for success. A new start is a time when the past can be learnt from and the future improved. It's like that in soccer as well.

A new season brings with it new hopes that this year, goals can be achieved and a success story will be written.

For Sydney Olympic, the start of the 1998/99 Ericsson Cup season was one such new beginning that promised so much, and yet delivered so little.

New owners ready to pour in dollars to make the 'Sleeping Giants' of Australian soccer a success story were in place. An experienced coach was appointed, new players brought in and a full-time professional set-up was put in place to help make the Blues a success story in season 1998/99.

All the ingredients appeared to be in place and Olympic were ready to launch their assault. But somewhere along the way the wheels fell off what had promised to be a 'well-oiled soccer machine' and Olympic failed, yet again, to fulfill its potential as a major force in Australian soccer.

Now, while six other clubs fight out the right to be named 'Champions of Australia', all those involved with Sydney Olympic will sit back and ponder, 'where did it all go wrong?'

For supporters of the club, who must sit back and watch the other three Sydney teams play in the finals, this question will be discussed and argued over until it is time for next season's kick-off.

In their state of utter disappointment, supporters will blame, as supporters do, everyone from the coach, to the players, the physio, the officials and ball boys, even the guy selling the hot dogs at half time.

But in Olympic's case, it is not as clear cut as the players failing to perform or the coach making the wrong decisions.

Disappointment aside, Olympic was only just nipped



at the post and only narrowly missed making a finals appearance.

The reality that they just missed out by the narrowest of margins can perhaps be blamed on the teams lack of consistency.

While at times during this past season, usually when at home at Belmore, Olympic played like that 'well-oiled soccer machine'. Blues supporters know and love, in other instances, they were a mere shadow of that team. This inconsistency proved to be a factor in their undoing in the end and Sydney Olympic will again be starved of Ericsson Cup success for yet another season.

Some may say that the number of new players brought in was a factor.

That, at any club, it takes time for a team to play as a team and not as 'individual stars'.

For Olympic, after an initial settling in period, it appeared that the players did gel as a unit and were worthy to be considered as a serious

threat for the Championship.

At times though, what they seemed to lack was a real leader. Taking nothing away from Captain Peter Tsekemis, who was inspirational at times, Olympic needed someone other than the Captain to stand up and take charge of proceedings, like during a crunch end of season game away from home upon which your finals hopes rest.

Mehmed Durakovic and Milan Blagojevic are two such players and had their acquisition come at the very start of the season, perhaps Olympic would now be in the thick of semi-final football action.

Maybe next season Olympic will get it right from start to finish because there is no question that a strong Olympic is good for the game in Australia.

Now, supporters can only ponder what might have been and look to next season when, one hopes, the 'Sleeping Giants' of Australian soccer will finally awake from their state of slumber and be a soccer force to be reckoned with.

The Ipswich Town v Norwich City derbies are as intense as any in the world. Back in the early 80s Ipswich's Mark Brennan and City's Ian Crook met regularly in the pressure cooker atmosphere of these clashes, reports Aidan Ormond.

Eighteen years later and the paths of these two hardened English professionals — both via Asia — have once more met. Crook with Spirit and Brennan with another Sydney side, Olympic.

For Brennan, Australia is a second port of call on a globetrotting adventure that he is revelling in, despite the odd family drama on the way.

The hard-working midfielder arrived here after a season in China's fledgling national league.

Australia and China must have been a culture shock for the player who also spent time with Man City, Middlesbrough and Oldham Athletic, but the desire to see other countries has made it all a positive experience for the 33-year-old, who also holds six England U/21 and four U/18 appearances.

Firstly, the China leg of his sojourn.

"Everyone in pre-season, including the trialists, goes into a sort of camp, with lights out at 10.30pm and you're up at 6.30am. It's all focussed on fitness. As you can imagine, the Chinese are very much into this conditioning aspect of their game and I suppose as a newcomer it must seem somewhat strange."

So why China?



No more Samba Soccer this year for Olympic's long-suffering fans.

"It's all down to one thing, which is doing the test at the end of the four to five weeks to see whether you are good enough for the team," explains Brennan.

"I just put my head down and made a go of it. There are lots of foreigners over there who do speak English — most Chinese didn't speak English — which made it easier. Look, I really enjoyed it," he stresses. "To have travelled to every major city in China was a great experience for me."

So Brennan would be ideally placed to comment on our neighbours' standard of football, which he says shows potential in some areas, despite some impatience.

"Well, the top two divisions in England take all the players, in England we have a very good players' union so I put my name down for playing abroad, which is something I always fancied, and someone came up with China."

There was however a China Crisis of sorts for the Brennan family, with Mrs Brennan having a baby while her husband was there however, the new born daughter was found to have a hole in her heart. Fortunately, China turned out the best place to be for that alarming circumstance.

"They could not find anything wrong with her in England, they turned her away from the doctor's back home, yet in China they found out the problem immediately, and the club made the necessary arrangements to send her back for an operation."

"Anyway, after that drama my wife got in contact with Ericsson Cup clubs about a year ago because I fancied playing abroad again. Branko (Culina) saw my video and that was that. I trialled and ended up at Belmore."

As for this year, the disappointment was palpable and Brennan believes the away form was one of the main reasons for missing the six.

"No-one, not even Spirit, took us apart at home. We were unbeaten at home except for that game, and even then we gave them a good run," he notes.

"We have the makings of a great side. We have a top set of lads. The club has been great to me and the camaraderie with the guys has been very good."

"The standard overall has probably been higher than I thought," he observes. "I've been impressed and why not. There are some great young players, and not just at my club."

"Obviously the heat at times does affect the standard of the league. Everyone should be kicking off in the evening. Having said that I have enjoyed the season."

"As for not making the six we felt we deserved to make it. It was just one of those things."

With Australia's excellent medical facilities, the Brennans — currently living in Brighton — would like to stay in Australia in the future, a country they have fallen in love with ("the climate is perfect, my family love it").

And the chance to once more lock horns with the pugnacious Spirit midfielder Ian Crook must be an added incentive for Mark Brennan to stay in Sydney.



Brennan at Belmore earlier this year against Spirit's Robbie Slater and Danny Watkins.

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Australian Features



The Four Diegos continue their VW Combi Van tour by dropping in on a man charged with the task of rejuvenating Melbourne Knights. Please welcome their General Manager Damien Phillips ...



Diegos: "It's seems that the day-to-day running of a traditional Ericsson Cup soccer club is akin to breaking into a cold sweat on harrowing ride on the 'Big Dipper' at Luna Park.

"How have you found your first foray into managing an Aussie soccer club and do you ever feel like yelling 'Stop the roller-coaster I want to get off'?"

Phillips: "Sometimes it's like banging your head against a brick wall but overall it's been pretty good. I am really enjoying it even though there are some frustrating times like any job. When you've got the uniqueness of sport involved it can be a little bit frustrating."

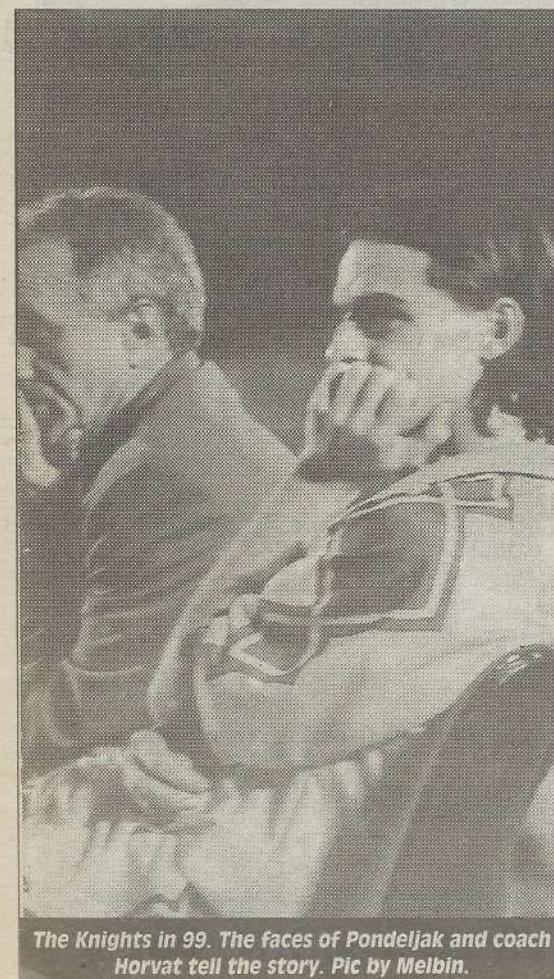
Diegos: "A news report that broke recently announced that a 'Royal' delegation of distinguished Knights powerbrokers have been in Britain trying to woo the likes of Manchester United, West Ham and Glasgow Celtic into a hot and passionate relationship of some sort.

"Other than Posh Spice and David Beckham doing a duet as part of the Knights pre-game entertainment, what other benefits does the club hope to get from a link with the likes of Manchester United?"



Phillips: "You've got us already. In actual fact, we don't really want David Beckham but would love to have Posh Spice."

"We're obviously exploring all options as a club. It's getting harder and harder to run traditional NSL clubs, so we have to explore all our options in terms of private ownership. We are, at very least, trying to get ideas from these types of clubs as to how they run their operations so successfully. We would be mad not to explore these sorts of options."



The Knights in 99. The faces of Podeljak and coach Horvat tell the story. Pic by Melbin.

Diegos: "You have had extensive experience in the administration of Rugby and AFL in past years. Is your approach to the administration of Aussie soccer a Tony Lockett 'Get Out of My Way — I'm a Big man' approach or do you adopt a more thoughtful, intelligent, Nick Farr Jones scrum half style?"

Phillips: "You always take ideas from one job to another, particularly in sport. You've got to deal with the uniqueness of each sport but at the same time understand that it is the same type of job and skills required. Hopefully in my case, I hope I can bring in a few different ideas from a few different sports, that's the beauty of me having worked in a variety of sports."

Diegos: "In line with portraying a new image to attract a broader market, there is talk of the Knights changing their name."

"Along with the Melbourne Soccer club, other catchy names such as the Dockland Ducks and a particular favorite with the younger players, the Nightclub Knights, have been touted."

"Has any concrete decision been made about a name and home venue for the club next season?"

Phillips: "No not yet. We are working to those issues at the moment. There are a number of different options that we are looking at. We still have to go to the members for any decision of that magnitude though."

"At the moment we are getting out there doing the research and measuring the interest levels of various different people to find out what would work."

Diegos: "The Ericsson Cup is a competition clearly in transition. Clubs like Perth Glory and Northern Spirit represent the Gordon Gecko corporate high-fliers and a club like the Knights represent the older, comfortable 'Sleep Wonderfully Warm with Linda' traditional clubs — a meeting place for ethnic group in years past."

"Realistically can the Knights ever appeal to a broader market without alienating its traditional following crudely put will Gordon Gecko ever sleep wonderfully warm with Linda?"

Phillips: "I suppose they are the issues we are working through at the moment. It's a difficult one. We are not the only club that is facing this. We are all thinking — if we don't go and broaden our horizons then we're gone. We realise that we can't survive on an average of 2,500 people per gate."

"We have to expand and attract not only supporters but also, corporate sponsorship. At the end of the day, if we want to survive as an entity we have to make decisions and



The Knights when they were kings of Australia Can you see how many stars they had? We can see you Viduka, Juric, Spiteri and Marusic ...

changes that will not only ensure the survival of the club but also its long term future on and off the field."

Diegos: "The Knights in the past have exported some world class young talent in the form of Mark Viduka, Joe Simunic, Danny Tiatto, overseas."

"Is this ability to produce such outstanding young talent this country's biggest soccer asset?"

Phillips: "I think so. That's the major appeal of Australian soccer to overseas clubs. West Ham has already set up academies in Western Australia and New South Wales and a lot of other clubs are starting to show some interest in Australia because they can see that the talent is here."

"If we had a better international program for our senior Socceroos, I believe that we would definitely be in the top 30 nations in the world because I think we've got the talent. Our national team hardly plays each year and when it does it's not in meaningful fixtures."

"Under these circumstances we are not going to

progress as a nation. We have so many players heading off overseas, almost on a weekly basis, but we are not getting the fruits of our labour in terms of national team benefits."

Diegos: "Unconfirmed speculation on the world's frenetic money markets is that the Knights will be soon listed on the stock exchange as a subsidiary of 'Mark Viduka Holdings P/L' as a result of the million dollar inflow to the Knights of Viduka's transfer from Zagreb to Celtic."

"How important is the money to the club and could you have survived without it?"

Phillips: "Well actually we were toying with calling the club the Melbourne 'Vidukas'. At the end of the day, full credit to the club officials many years ago, who had the forethought and vision to negotiate a clause in Mark's transfer agreement that has now provided a lifeline for the club. When I first came to the club that money was suppose to have arrived, two months later I was wondering how I was going to pay the bills."

"When it came it was certainly welcome but we don't want to spend it in any haphazard way. We have to be smart with what we do with it and try to ensure a future for the club."

Diegos: "Thanks Damien. Whether it be the Melbourne Viduka's or the Dockland Ducks we hope you can provide Victorians a club we can be proud of. Adios amigos!"

Phillips: "Thanks Diegos. You never know, we might go with the 'Melbourne' Diegos' as our new club name; Ole! Adios amigos!"

The Four Diegos radio soccer show can be heard in Melbourne on 97.4 FM Saturday 10-12 midday

E-Mail 'The Diegos' on FourDiegos@bigpond.com.

SOCER WOMAN

WITH JANENE MAR IN CANBERRA



THE KEEPER OF KEEPERS



In what is believed to be a first for a touring Australian Soccer Team, the Matildas will have the expertise of Goalkeeper Coach Steve Hoshovsky on hand at the upcoming World Cup.

Too often, goalkeepers are the neglected members of many teams, yet it is more than obvious that they are a specialist position, vastly different to any field position.

The Matildas will be overseas for anything up to six weeks on their most important campaign to date, and the keepers can ill afford to be left to fend for themselves. Goalkeepers more than anyone need consistent quality specialist work.

The Aussie outfit is ever on the lookout for ways to gain an extra edge and not so proud so as not to learn from others. Top women's nations Norway, China, Sweden and Brazil have long utilised the services of a goalkeeper coach on major tours and the Matildas will happily follow their lead. US National Coach Tony DiCicco is himself a former national team Goalkeeper Coach, international goalkeeper, and runs his own goalkeeper camps. Australia's successful Hockeyroos have also travelled with a keeper coach for the past four years.

With the generous funding assistance of the Australian Sports Commission, the Matildas will rectify this area, considered a high priority.

Hoshovsky took on the coaching role last December following the departure of long-time AIS Goalkeeper Coach Paul Jones. A Level 2 coach and working towards his Level 3, Hoshovsky spent several years working with the ACT Academy of Sport program, firstly with the men's program before becoming Assistant to then women's ITC Coach Chris Tansey for a year.

Over the years, he has conducted goalkeeper clinics for the ACTWSA, and is now working with Soccer Canberra at becoming a coaching course provider.

With a Bachelor of Education and Diploma in PE to his name, Hoshovsky is well-placed to provide the Matildas' keepers the best of instruction, and happens to be taking a year off from his teaching career to be a Mr Mum to his almost-three-year-old daughter.

"It's a matter of trying to have the best preparation for the whole team," said Hoshovsky of his role.

"The goalkeepers are an important part of the team. In the overall context, it's being the best prepared, to go away and do well, and covering all the components. Everyone understands it's a specialist position, but not everyone can know how to coach keepers — they have special requirements."

"To have the keepers in best possible preparation, means therefore you'll get the best out of the overall team. So it's quite important to have someone to look solely after the interests of the goalkeepers."

On the road, Hoshovsky feels his role will not differ too much from that practised from week to week, with technique being the overriding theme.

"I'll be watching out for any areas needing help or improvement," he said. "But it's like looking after a machine — if it's working okay, then it just requires some finetuning to keep going without changing too much. We'll keep working on technique, to ensure it's polished enough to cater for all the sorts of situations that arise on the field. Good technique provides a better chance of coping, whether it be in saving a goal or in decision-making."

"A keeper's decision is a split-second decision, but all the preparation that goes into it has been done beforehand. I hope I've helped to give them a good repertoire for them to cope with whatever happens during the game. Everyone's aware that if a goalkeeper makes a mistake, then it could cost the

team a medal-winning opportunity.

Then also if the keeper makes a good decision, it could mean going into a medal position. If there's anything that needs changing, then I'll be there to do it on the spot, whereas there are others to look after the other positions.

Hoshovsky works with AIS scholarship keepers Belinda Kitching and Joanne Butland at least three times per week, a frequency which may increase in these last few weeks before the World Cup, plus video sessions to analyse technique and decision-making.

Joining the Queensland pair in the battle for one of the two World Cup goalkeeper spots is veteran Tracey Wheeler, who arrived in Canberra last week.

Wheeler's arrival has become more significant with Kitching sidelined following ankle surgery.

Kitching has held the number one spot since early 1997 following injury to Wheeler, and at age 21 has notched up a total of 28 caps. The raw Butland has developed enormously since starting at the AIS and the 20 year old has played three internationals.

Wheeler, 31, has the experience of a World Cup behind her and a total of

AUSTRALIAN CUSTODIANS

An even dozen of goalkeepers have represented Australia in an 'A' international:

Toni McMAHON	NSW	10 caps	1979-88
Theresa JONES	VIC	9	1980-88
Vicki SALMONS	NSW	5	1983-84
Sabine BUSCHMANN	NT	1	1986
Janelle RENSHAW	NNSW	3	1987
Tracey WHEELER	NSW/WA	33	1989-1998
Debra BONSHORE	NNSW	2	1989-91
Claire NICHOLS	QLD	10	1994-95
Amanda PATERSON	NSW	2	1994-97
Denise LOFTHOUSE	WA	1	1995
Belinda KITCHING	QLD	28	1996-99
Joanne BUTLAND (top left)	QLD	3	1999

33 caps over ten years, but lacks consistent quality coaching whilst back at home in Perth.

"The three work well with and for each other, even though they know their spot is on the line. It's a great atmosphere, there are no grudges against each other, and when the selections are made, I know they'll be supportive for each other with intentions for them to do well."

If they miss out, they'll know they've tried their best, and there's still the Olympics to strive for."

Still at school, Hoshovsky started his senior playing career with Sydney clubs Melita and Auburn before breaking through into higher ranks. Keen to take up an offer with South Melbourne, Hoshovsky travelled down for pre-season commitments but was unable to secure a teaching job there.

He ended up at Canberra City and Inter Monaro, spending eight seasons

in national league from 1979 to 1986.

Travelling to England alone at age eighteen, Hoshovsky tried his luck at Chelsea, during the time of keepers Peter Bonetti and Peter Osgood.

But after three months as an apprentice, things didn't really work out and the young Aussie returned home. "It was one of those things I had to try, see, do.

If you don't, you'll forever dwell on it later."

It takes a person of certain qualities to make a goalie — but does that include craziness?

"Who does all the running, and who just stands there?" quips Hoshovsky. "Who's more crazy?"

He says he read of a club in England where passers-by could hear yelling and screaming — it being the goalkeeper practicing diving on the concrete floor.

"Goalkeepers are often very eccentric", is his explanation. "Players like Bosnich and Kalac are very outgoing, although I'm probably the opposite, but I guess we're all eccentric in our own way." Perhaps this is an area our girls need to work on?

As for other qualities, Hoshovsky says a keeper certainly has to be an individual, but a team player as well. A lot of determination, plus the physical qualities such as agility, strength, quickness, and decision-making.

They must stick by their decisions even if they might be wrong, but to learn from that. And a goalkeeper has to work really hard to achieve what they want to achieve.

Hard work goes with the territory, Hoshovsky remembering having to start training early, before then training with the team, and then staying back for a total of over three hours. He agrees the repetition drills are also hard going, but stresses that the focus must still remain on good technique.

"Plus the intensity of training is a lot greater, for instance a shooting session with twenty players will mean the other players may rest for 19 shots, whilst the keeper might work for ten shots to a forward's one. The percentage workload is much higher."

There can be no greater illustration of how a player's mental state can affect one's game than with a goalkeeper. A keeper needs to be authoritative, in control, commanding and strong in her convictions, both in leading her own defence and taking on the opposition attack.

"The pressure on a goalkeeper is a lot greater, and probably why goalkeepers develop eccentricities to overcome all that. We all have different things to help cope. Keepers are a special breed and must have confidence in their own ability. If you're down, you're in all sorts of difficulty."

And it's a confidence in everything, in one's surroundings. The ground, the wind, the rain can all play on a keeper's mind, plus there may be other external factors to deal with."

Hoshovsky recalls some such external factors, like getting pelted by little stones by the crowd, and comments from the spectators, including threats and even bribes.

Working so closely with the goalkeepers on tour, Hoshovsky presumes he may do some on the spot mental coaching if necessary, although the team also has a sports psychologist. "If I can see they're not attuned, then that's the time to get them to focus and refocus."

Hopefully our keepers would never need to contend with dodging stones from the crowd, but whatever the situation, they'll now know they have their own Hoshovsky to turn to.

WORLD UPDATE

ONE APIECE TO USA AND CHINA

China continued on its marathon overseas tour with two matches against rivals USA in Pennsylvania and New York. The first played on 22 April ended in a 2-1 win to the US, avenging their loss to China in the final of the recent Algarve Cup.

USA veteran Michelle Akers converted a penalty midway through the first half dominated by the home side, her 101st international goal. Chinese maestro Sun Wen then equalised with a breathtaking 30 metre free-kick fourteen minutes after the break in a hard fought second term.

Substitute Tisha Venturini became the matchwinner, entering the game two minutes into stoppage time. Her only touch for the game was to slide in on a rebound off the Chinese keeper for a close range winner.

The American outfit were happy to have put together their best performance for some time.

Three days later at Giants Stadium, the result was reversed in a match which followed a very similar pattern. A fantastic spectacle of football for the 23,765 strong crowd, China started fast and aggressive to take control of the first half.

The visitors were rewarded with another Sun Wen special, this time converting a well-worked short corner play.

The US stepped up a gear in the second half, Cindy Parlow dangerous in creating numerous scoring chances, including one finished by Julie Foudy in the 58th minute to draw level at 1-1.

Then in the last minute of play, China caught out the Americans on the counterattack, Zhang Ouying this time scoring a brilliant late winner to snatch victory.

25 April

CHINA 2 (Sun Wen 14, Zhang Ouying 90) def USA 1 (Foudy 58)
Giants Stadium, New York
Crowd 23,765

22 April

USA 2 (Akers 20, Venturini 90) def CHINA 1 (Sun Wen 59)
Hersheypark Stadium, Pennsylvania
Crowd 15,257

22 April

GERMANY 3 (Grings 11, Wiegmann 44, Lingor 79) def DENMARK 1
(Pedersen 56) Saarbrucken, Germany
Crowd 1050

21 April

ITALY 1 (Panico 39) drew with SWEDEN 1 (Tornqvist 3)
Soverato, Italy
Crowd 1050

Varna Cup, Bulgaria (8-nation tournament)

17 April
SCOTLAND 1 drew with NORTH KOREA 1
RUSSIA 0 drew with UKRAINE 0

18 April

Final - RUSSIA 3 def SCOTLAND 0
Third Place - NORTH KOREA 2 UKRAINE 1

MATILDAS' WORLD CUP

THE 20-MEMBER MATILDAS WORLD CUP TEAM WILL BE ANNOUNCED ON 14 MAY

DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT FOR THE WORLD CUP SUPPORTERS' TOUR HAS BEEN EXTENDED TO 17 MAY.

PLEASE CONTACT FLIGHT CENTRE AUSTRALIA FAIR ON (07) 5591.3677 FOR DETAILS ON THE 24-DAY GOLD TOUR AND 12-DAY SILVER TOUR. TRAVEL TO THE USA AND SUPPORT THE MATILDAS!

MAY IS... ERICSSON CUP FINALS

Please note, these fixtures are supplied by Soccer Australia, and are correct at time of printing.

Please check local guides in case of changes.

We accept no responsibility for any late changes to fixtures, or incorrect information supplied to us.

ELIMINATION

FINAL (first legs)

Northern Spirit 0

Marconi Farfield 0

Adelaide City 0

Perth Glory 0

THIS WEEK

(Finals Series: Week 2)

Elimination Final Second Legs

Saturday 8 May

Perth Glory v

Adelaide City

The WACA, Perth

Sunday 9 May

Marconi Fairfield v

Northern Spirit

Marconi Stadium,

Sydney

Major Semi-Final First Leg

Sunday 9 May

South Melbourne v

Sydney United

Bob Jane Stadium





ERICSSON CUP FIRST LEG ELIMINATION FINAL



NORTHERN SPIRIT
l.c.

Spirit WILLING BUT STALLIONS UNBROKEN

BLOOD AND GUTS FINAL SETS UP CLASSIC RETURN LEG

MARCONI
NORTHERN SPIRIT
At North Sydney Oval, Sydney
Elimination Final First Leg

0
0

By Bonnie Mesiades

You know the type of day the rest of Australia always jokes about when we talk about Melbourne weather? Summer one moment, winter the next.

Well that was Sydney on Friday. At one stage, North Sydney Oval, the picturesque home ground of Northern Spirit was bathed in autumn sunshine; next, it received a heavy downpour; then a combination of rain and bright sunshine together; followed by a drop in temperature and a cool but overcast night.

After several days of rain, the weather was no doubt a deterrent for some people venturing out to see the first leg of the elimination final between the two Sydney teams which finished fourth and fifth after the 30 preliminary rounds.

Nonetheless, 17,246 braved the unpredictability of the colluding clouds, thus setting a new attendance record for an elimination final in the national soccer league (at least until Perth Glory play at the WACA in one week's time).

Significantly also, it outstripped attendance at the rugby league game being played at Parramatta Stadium by more than 4,000.

This local derby is shaping-up to be one of the great rivalries of the national league.

While last week's Round 30 game was uncompromising and competitive, this first round semi-final stepped up a gear and became unrelenting and tough, but with only two yellow cards.

However, while Marconi was the walking wounded, Northern Spirit were relatively unscathed. Two Marconi players had stitches; four had to leave the field for the 'blood bin'; one was stretchered off for lengthy treatment; and two had to be substituted because of injuries.

"We played with plenty of guts," said Frank Farina, the Marconi coach, at the end of the game. "Sheer determination got us through and it was a magnificent effort."

"It was a typical semi-final," said Northern Spirit coach, Graham Arnold. "A lot of aggression and not much football."

Within 30 seconds of referee Eugene Brazzale signalling the start of proceedings, Northern Spirit was on the attack through Matthew Langdon, with a long-range shot on goal which travelled low and just wide.

Marconi answered in the 3rd minute with a powerful left-foot strike from Brendan Renaud from a metre or so outside the penalty box which cannoned into the cross bar.

There was a big "Ooohhhhh" of relief from the large and loud Northern Spirit crowd — and rightly so, as it proved to be one of the two best strikes on goal for the full ninety minutes.

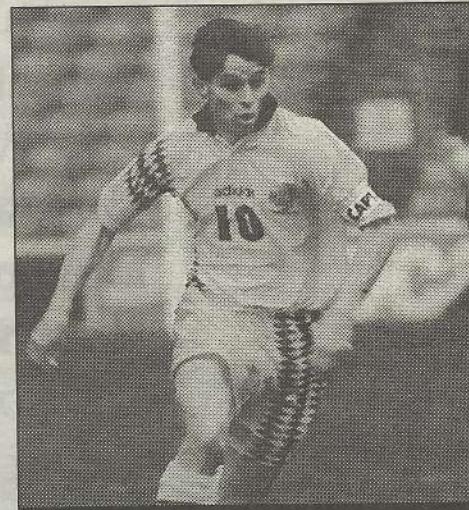
It was a typically nervous semi-final start from both sides, with the teams trading high balls and headers and quite a few mistakes.

What became increasingly clear, however, was that it would be a game where both sides would struggle to score. Both defences had strong games, particularly Arnold and Mark Rusan at one end and Dominic Longo and Robbie Hooker at the other.

Northern Spirit's creative play-maker, Kresimir Marusic, was kept relatively subdued by first, Buddy Farah and then superbly, by an uncompromising Darren McDonald.

Northern Spirit often looked to former Marconi player, Matt Bingley, to make runs from deep in defence but this manoeuvre was usually thwarted by Marconi.

Similar moves by Casserly down the flank were also impeded. Robbie Slater's high work rate saw him run over every blade of grass, but the grassy path to the goal mouth eluded him.



Frank Farina ... Spirit is a quality side.

The casualty count for Marconi at the end of the first half was still relatively low. Only Pan Keun Kim needed to be taken off because of injury — but in the 50th minute, Farina was forced again to re-shuffle his back line when Mark Babic also limped off, to be replaced by Marcus Phillips.

Soon after, the last 'surviving' original defender, Dominic Longo, was forced to leave the field temporarily to receive six stitches and have his head bandaged.

Phillips' mobility, combined with Renaud's speed, had the effect of opening-up the game for Marconi and around the 65th minute, he forced a corner which led to a succession of four corners for Marconi, including another great goal-scoring opportunity.

After a superbly hit corner from Christian Care, Spirit goal-keeper Paul Henderson, was left stranded when the bandaged Longo headed the ball goalwards only to find Crook resolutely in place to clear the ball off the line.

Henderson was forced to make another save from the next corner, before Northern Spirit was able to clear the ball from their danger area.

McDonald, Care and Robbie Hooker all required off-field attention during the remainder of the match. Care, like Longo, required stitches and a bandage; and it almost seemed as if Marconi had adopted a new tiara-like headpiece to match their beauty-sash strip.



Graham Arnold ... help make rugby league scared of us, says Arnie. So get down to Marconi for the big game.

SUPPORTER'S VIEW ...

In typical North Sydney Oval style the crowd was a little slow to get there, but the Bob Stand was absolutely jammed packed. The showers however may have deterred a few fans, particularly on the Hill.

Awaratefe copped a lot from the crowd. One song in particular was "Francis is a girl's name, girl's name, na na na." There is a love-hate relationship with him, but it would be good to have him at Spirit, we need that sort of player. We weren't happy with a draw but at least we did not concede an away goal, which was the general consensus.

As the fans were leaving there was something missing, like it was a non-event. Even the players looked half-hearted as they went to the fans. Everyone I guess was just disappointed.

It was not as absorbing as other games, it was very much a midfield contest. It was end-to-end, but got bogged down in midfield. Marusic was solid and Slater was his usual full of commitment. For Marconi no-one really stood out, more of a team effort from them. For Spirit, no-one had a bad game.

For the return leg in our favour we will be that we will have just as many supporters down there as them. We have to score goals, but I don't think home ground is going to be a great advantage for the Stallions.

Spirit needs to improve their crosses in order to win the second leg, and of course have a goal scorer who can convert the chances.

Geoff Coy, Spirit supporter and Bob Stand regular

MATCH STATS

Crowd: 17,264

Referee: Eugene Brazzale

Marconi Fairfield: Covic, M Babic (Phillips, 50), Longo, Kim (Care, 37), McDonald, Z. Babic (Bruni, 87), Smith, Farah, Awaratefe, Renaud, Hooker.

Northern Spirit: Henderson, Crook, Rusan, Casserly, Marusic, Slater, Arnold, Watkins (Zane, 56), Bilokapic, Langdon (Farina, 76), Bingley

Yellows

Northern Spirit: Crook
Marconi Fairfield: Pan Keun Kim

Players Votes of the Year:

- 3: Renaud (M)
- 2: Arnold (NS)
- 1: McDonald (M)

Longo needed further off-field attention when his shoulder popped out.

Despite the enforced game of musical chairs in Marconi's defence, Marconi managed to keep out Northern Spirit, including two successive corners late in the match, with Renaud, Smith and Hooker combining well to ensure that Northern Spirit's danger men didn't get foot or head to the ball in the dying minutes of the first leg.

A stiff and sore Arnold said after the game that he had been planning to put himself up-front to help solve Northern Spirit's well-documented problem in front of goal, but he said his neck is not up to it. He said his options for this week are still "very open".

Arnold believes that a scoreless draw puts Marconi under more pressure than Northern Spirit.

"They either have to score two, or stop us from scoring. They can't afford to sit back behind the ball."

"But they are an experienced side, and I expect a good game."

Frank Farina returned the compliment.

"They are a quality side and this week won't be easy."

He said the task was made more difficult for Marconi because of the high casualty rate from the game.

"The fittest person on the field was Stan, our trainer!" said Farina. "I don't know yet who will be available and who won't, so at the moment, it's a bit of déjà-vu from earlier in the season, but hopefully we can recover in time."

Arnold and Farina agreed that there was one positive point which Sydney media had not yet picked up on.

"We've got three teams in the finals and there should at least be one of us in the Grand Final. If that's the case, I hope we can forget all the rivalry and ensure that the Ericsson Cup is brought back to New South Wales," said Arnold.

Farina, a Queenslander, didn't quite go that far, but agreed with Arnold in encouraging all football fans to get out to support the three Sydney teams and, in Arnie's words, help "make rugby league scared of us."

In summary, it's just about down to a war of attrition. This week's second leg promises to be an enthralling encounter between these two proud, tough and competitive sides.

Will the Stallions be broken by the Spirit?



MARCONI V SPIRIT PART TWO

HENDO & FRANNY SPEAK



AWARITEFE: IT'S CRUNCH TIME

By Bonnie Mersiades

At the post-match interviews after last Friday's game, Northern Spirit coach, Graham Arnold, described Francis Awaritefe as "a pain in the a----!".

But Arnold went on to admit that Awaritefe would be just the type of "pain" he would be happy to put up with in his own side.

Later told of Arnold's comment, Awaritefe just laughed and said "That's a big compliment!"

When Marconi coach, Frank Farina, made the move south from the Brisbane Strikers at the end of last season, friends of Farina were understood to have said to Awaritefe that "Frank doesn't want you. Come to Brisbane."

It was a joke. Awaritefe was a player Farina dearly wanted to keep in Marconi colours.

When two Socceroo legends in Arnold and Farina, both of whom are strikers, are that complimentary, one tends to get the sense that we're talking about a highly valued player.

"His work rate, his moves on the ball," said Arnold, "he's such a good example to the younger players."

"I think I'm actually a little bit younger than him," said Farina, "but he's got better legs than me. I couldn't do what he still does over a season. He's still got speed and he's such an annoying player."

So annoying, that he even annoys his team mates at times.

"Yeah" laughed Farina. "He trains the way he plays — which is what I like to see — and sometimes gets up the nose of some of his team mates at training."

"But every team needs a Franny. He works hard and wants the team to do well."

And after the first leg of the elimination semi-final, Awaritefe thinks the team is in a good position to do well.

"I thought the result was good for us. Our defence was superb, and there was a lot of courage shown out there."

"The big question is who we will have to put on the field next week. We lost Kim and Mark, then Chris, Zelko, Macca and Dom were all hit pretty hard so it was almost a question of the last man standing by the end of the game."

"I don't know how long it was, but there would have been a fair bit of time throughout the game when we were down to ten men while someone was being treated on the sideline."

"I hope I can keep going for a little while yet. I'm not making any plans to hang up the boots regardless of where our season ends up."

"I think I'll know when it's time to stop, and I don't think that time has come yet," he said.

In fact, Farina's big issue is who to play up-front with Francis with first team choices of Sean Babic or Kris Trajanovski, as well as younger talents such as Joe Bruni.

There's also the League's second-top goalscorer, captain and midfielder Brad Maloney, who has been absent from the



"If we can get through this game, I think we can go all the way," says big Francis.

Marconi line-up for the past two games against Northern Spirit due to injury.

"Brad has been a big loss for us the past two weeks," said Francis. "Hopefully, he'll be back for the game next week."

"He creates an extra option for us; he's such a hard worker; and he's got to be one of the fittest men in the national league."

Awaritefe knows he'll receive close attention again from Northern Spirit's big defenders as well as their loyal 'Bob Stand' supporters in the more intimate confines of the Marconi Stadium.

After scoring last week's goal, Awaritefe celebrated to the travelling 'Bob Standers' who had been giving him a bit of stick.

"I don't mind that. They love their football, and the culture they've adopted is to be extremely one-sided and to abuse the opposition and the referee. They're having a good time, and I enjoy giving it back to them!"

"It's one of the reasons why I like North Sydney Oval. It's a great arena to play in because of the crowd and the atmosphere — although the surface itself is too hard and slippery and doesn't really allow for good football."

Awaritefe believes next week is the crunch time for Marconi.

"If we can get through this game, I think we can go all the way."

A bold prediction from the old warhorse? It looks like all roads lead to Bossley Park next Sunday for Sydney football fans.

HEADS UP LADS WE CAN DO IT, SAYS SPIRIT'S HENDO

By Spirit keeper Paul Henderson

Playing finals football was a completely different experience for me last Friday night when we drew 0-0 with Marconi at North Sydney Oval.

It was almost like starting all over again. It was the most nervous I have been for a long time but the nerves were a little different to the type I experienced in my first NSL game against Sydney Olympic.

On that day I was nervous, worried that I would be able to handle myself and would I be up to it but after playing all 28 matches during the regular season, that feeling has long gone.

I know I belong in the NSL and I know I am capable of mixing it with the best players in the NSL. Hence, the reason for my nerves on Friday night.

Throughout the season, as I have grown in confidence I have been getting a few pats on the back and for a guy playing his first season in the NSL it is nice. What it also means is that good performances are now expected from me.

The last place I want to disappoint people and make a big mistake is during the big atmosphere of finals football.

It was also a funny feeling having a reserve goalkeeper on the bench. The rules in the finals allow for five subs and Arnie decided to put a reserve goalkeeper on the bench (Peter Blazincic).

For the first time I thought to myself, 'Gee if I make a few mistakes they could take me off and put Pete on.'

He is a great goalkeeper and I have been lucky to keep him and John Perosh in youth league all year, but, for the first time there was an option for Arnie.

It felt funny and I think it added to my nerves when I walked out on Friday night but as soon as I saw the big crowd and our supporters I knew I was home. North Sydney Oval has become like a home for me.

The supporters have really taken to me and they made me feel as though I was on familiar territory and it helped me forget about the nerves and get on with the game.

To have 17,246 fans at the game was something special but I feel we were robbed by the bad weather that hit Sydney all week. I have no doubts we would have hit the 20,000 mark if the weather had been fine.

Never mind, we'll be back to North Sydney Oval plenty more times in the coming years and that magic 20,000 barrier will be reached.

Hopefully we can topple Marconi and Adelaide City can come out on top of Perth so we can play one more game at North Sydney Oval this year.

Before we start looking ahead though we have to focus on the job at hand, beating Marconi.

I must start by saying I thought the game last Friday night was one of the toughest games I had ever seen, let alone played in.

There was nothing dirty, just two teams throwing absolutely everything into a game, which meant a great deal to a lot of people.

There has been plenty said and written about the rivalry between the two clubs and it is something that you can sense when we meet on the field.

I think it is great to have rivalries but the best thing is the good feeling between the two sets of players when the final whistle has sounded.

On the field it was like a battle.



Both sides drew a line in the sand and protected their side of the field like it was their own territory.

Guys like Billy (Paul Biloškić), Rudes (Mark Rudan), Crooky (Ian Crook) and Bingers (Matthew Bingley) threw everything into their opponents from the start to the finish and it was great to see such commitment from the Northern Spirit defence.

Rudes was actually named Man of the Match and I agree with that as he did a great job closing down Francis Awaritefe.

Marconi seem to have been battered and bruised but we are under no false illusions that Sunday's battle at Marconi Stadium will be just as tough with only one team staying in the race for the title after the match.

I think Marconi will play more openly than they did at North Sydney Oval, which should allow us a little more space in attack so guys like Robbie (Slater), Kresh (Kresimir Marušić), Clacka (Clayton Zane) and Danny (Daniel Watkins) can do their thing.

If we can get an early goal or go one up it is going to be very tough for Marconi, as a 1-1 draw will be good enough for us.

In saying that, I'm a goalkeeper and I will be protecting my net with the same passion and drive I have played with all year.

Hopefully it won't be the last time I get to stand between the sticks this season and we can move past Marconi and into the next round.

What I'd love to see is plenty of Spirit fans out at Marconi Stadium to see us go into the second part of the battle.



ERICSSON CUP FIRST LEG ELIMINATION FINAL



ADELAIDE CITY



ZEBRAS RUN OUT OF LUCK



THE DOCTOR UNABLE TO DELIVER A CITY GOAL

ADELAIDE CITY
PERTH GLORY
At Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide
Elimination Final First Leg

By Margaret Bowden and Donald Campbell

This game proved a veritable meeting of the who's who of ex Australian players. Former captains Paul Wade and Gary Marocchi were there, with Robbie Wheatley and big Alan Hunter — all intent on painting a passionate, knowledgeable picture of this all important match to the television and radio audiences.

So many suits have not been seen at Hindmarsh since the Olympic qualifiers back in 1996!

The purple and orange bedecked travelling Glory fans invaded the Adelaide City bar before the game. They were welcomed with open arms as they swelled the day's takings!

Then it was over to the Eastern side of Hindmarsh, reverted to standing room only with the removal of all seats in readiness for the next building stage.

The Zebra cheer squad took up its customary position behind the northern goal. A small band of Glory supporters also ventured into this area. The chanting was begun well before kick-off.

This was what had been missing from most matches — an opposition presence to spur the home fans into action. Drums, horns, plenty of noise, colour and a lot of friendly rivalry added to the atmosphere, as did Glory's brilliant purple on the pitch. In the stand, however, there was more noise at times from the three teams of radio broadcasters than from the fans, with Adelaide's 5RTI outnumbered 2-1 by Perth stations.

Talking point was the Glory bench — Boutsianis, Hay and Markovski would have been tipped as starters. And where were Kalogeracos and Wilkinson?

A roar arose from the crowd as the teams walked onto the pitch in the bright sunshine. An air of anticipation hung over Hindmarsh. Everyone expected a crackerjack game and they weren't disappointed.

How could a 0-0 draw be so entertaining? The entire 90 minutes was played at breakneck speed. Neither team would give an inch — tough tackles in every section of the park. Ex-City player Gareth Naven got stuck in at the back, cutting out City's attacks, while Jamie Harnwell did a great marking job on Damian Mori.

Alex Tobin performed his sliding tackles to perfection; Milan Ivanovic clinically dispossessed his opponents and ran forward.

The younger players from both sides provided the attacking flair. Nick Sabljak teamed with David Terminello to launch the Zebras into attack.

Both had early chances, but shot wide. Troy Halpin, Alistair Edwards and Bobby Despotovski were the linchpins in Glory's forays on goal, but like their Zebra counterparts, missed several chances. At the end of the day, both teams would rue their wasted opportunities. The Zebra 'old boys', Ivanovic and Tobin again played superbly in defence, ably assisted by Angelo Costanzo.

Both keepers, City's Jason Petkovic and Perth's Tony Franken, were brilliant, saving certain goals to keep their teams in with a chance. Tobin almost pulled off a repeat of last week's scoring header in the second half, but Scott Miller cleared the shot off the line. 88.5 Coast fm Player of the Match Ivanovic excited the crowd with his constant forays up field, setting up chances for Mori, Sabljak, Carl Veart, Terminello and Dino Menillo.

Each time 'the doctor' moved forward a murmur rippled around the stadium. What would happen? Would he go all the way up the pitch and score? An uncharacteristic mistake in the second half saw him

cautioned for grabbing Despotovski in a desperate attempt to stop the speedster from getting past him.

The later the game went, the more desperate each side was to win, but it was City which really turned up the pressure.

The first chance of the match went to Terminello, who shot wide in the 2nd minute from a great Sabljak

plucked the ball out of the air.

His clearance landed in the midfield, a block tackle sent the ball looping towards the 18 yard area, Mori ran onto it and leapt to head over Franken on the edge of the box. The crowd rose — then sat as the ball rolled wide of the right hand post. Ivanovic then went into attack, feeding Dongi-Ki Kim, whose cross into the box was headed clear.

It was the Veart's turn to miss, shooting over the bar after a fantastic heading sequence between Menillo and Mori. Then Franken dived to save a low shot from Carlo Talladira. Ivanovic had a chance with a free kick from 20 metres, but the shot hit the wall and looped high to Frank.

Now it was Perth's turn. Halpin and Despotovski threatened, Costanzo cleared, Edwards pounced and boomed in a long shot. Just over the bar!

Halpin was everywhere, and was cautioned for his efforts when he tripped Menillo on the counter attack. Perth regained possession, Despotovski let fly a swinging shot, Petkovic saved again!

Sabljak then broke through the Glory defence but Franken easily saved his close range shot.

Despotovski sent another one over the bar. So many wasted chances in this game. Glory had the last scoring chance of the half. Ivanovic put in a last gasp tackle on Despotovski as he raced into the box. The resulting corner caused huge problems for the City defence — Petkovic punched the ball out, it came back in high from the right, everyone missed it, there was a big scramble at the left hand post, but finally the ball was cleared.

The crowd swelled by about 800 after half time with people coming from the Crows v Power Showdown at Footy Park, adding to the noise on the Eastern side of the ground. The second half was a much less even contest, with City controlling 80% of the play.

But still they could not score. Veart had a chance in the first minute but Franken was there again. Five minutes in and Franken pulled off a great save, just



Troy Halpin ... lynchpin of the Glory midfield on Sunday.

cross. Edwards and Halpin threatened to cause problems in the box, but Tobin cut out the danger. Despotovski had a clear chance in the 4th minute, but shot wide.

Two minutes later Miller forced Petkovic into a diving save from a low shot. The next eight minutes was all Perth, then City got back into the game.

Robert Trajkovski sent in a long high shot from the right, Edwards ghosted in at the far post, but Petkovic

MATCH STATS...

Crowd: 5,500 est.

Referee: Matthew Breeze

Adelaide City: Petkovic, Ivanovic, Tobin, Talladira, Mori, Veart, Menillo (Yates 69), Costanzo (Dodd 85), Terminello, Sabljak, Kim 33.

Perth Glory: Franken, Trajkovski, Miller, Circati, Harnwell, Deans, Naven, Garcia (Strudwick 85), Edwards (Markovski 72), Despotovski, Halpin (Boutsianis 90).

Yellows

Adelaide City: Ivanovic
Perth Glory: Halpin

Players' Votes of the Year:

- 3: Milan Ivanovic (Adelaide City)
- 2: Troy Halpin (Perth Glory)
- 1: Gareth Naven (Perth Glory)

tipping the ball past the right hand post from a Talladira drive.

Miller cleared Tobin's header from the corner off the line. Franken again saved Glory with a finger tip save over the bar from a Menillo free kick a minute later.

Surely City must score. Kim then shot well over the bar, Sabljak shot wide from the edge of the box, then Terminello missed the golden chance of the game. In a lightning move down the left, Sabljak passed to Mori who raced to the bye line and cut the ball back to Terminello on the right. With nothing between him and the goal, Terminello sent his shot sailing over the bar.

Unbelievable miss. A series of frustrating offside decisions then got the City crowd on their feet. They could see their team was not going to score! Naven turned up the heat for Perth, but Ivanovic thwarted his attempts to go solo for goal.

As darkness and dampness descended on Hindmarsh, so it descended on the home fans' spirit. Attacking Menillo was replaced by defender Mark Yates, signalled frustration from coach Zoran Matic.

This was a safety first move with 21 minutes left. The substitution seemed to break Perth's concentration. Veart smashed a shot against the post! The crowd went berserk. When would they score? Ivanovic made more and more forays up field, but to no avail.

When big John Markovski came on for Edwards, the home fans got nervous.

Would he score? No. The big man hardly touched the ball. City were now desperate. Mori tried a shot from 25 metres — over the bar again.

Glory had a chance after 40 minutes when Miller ran all the way up the pitch and was flattened by Costanzo on the edge of the box. Another free kick wasted! It was City's turn, Mori getting a free kick after Harnwell wrestled him to the ground.

Again, no goal. Glory then had a free kick 35 metres out. Boutsianis was brought on for Halpin — the City fans waited. Boutsianis took the kick — high into the box — easy save Petkovic. In a last desperate attempt to score, Despotovski raced into attack, but Tobin again dispossessed him — final score 0-0.

The stage is now set for an even more thrilling encounter in Perth in front of a predicted 20-25,000 vocal Glory fans.

SUPPORTERS' VIEW ...

Adelaide City fan Ann Fioretti

Pre-match nerves, I've been to the ladies four times. Four corners for City in the first 25 minutes. Sadly no one able to put the ball where it belongs.

Our back line Ivanovic, Tobin, Costanzo are in fine form, with Milan even coming upfield. But the last touch is missing when we get into their area. We must fight harder for the ball. It's given away too easily.

Hey, I just noticed something — they miss just as nicely as we do! But perhaps Perth have a slightly more accurate passing game. Chances on both sides. At the end of the first half it's 0-0. Thank you Jason!

The second half. To me the first 25 minutes is always 'kitchen sink' time, when they throw it all at you. Good chance for City in the first minute. Another two close chances. We seem to be getting on top, but what chances we are missing!

I'm sure Perth defenders want to be friends with Damian Mori — they hold him all the time! Now it's turning around again in favour of Perth. There has to be some luck for us soon. The hard work is there, the determination too. The luck in front of goal is all bad. We were the better team in the end, but the no score line did not reflect this.

Glory fan Bruno Marocchi

Can't see too much. Everyone's jumping up and down in front of us. The City supporters are getting stuck into us — lot of noise. Good fun!

The game was pretty even. Very enjoyable. Glory had three quarters of the play in the first half. Missed three or four goals. City had a couple of chances. They were more defensive.

In the second half, City really came down and attacked. Glory were more defensive. The 2nd half really belonged to Adelaide. At one stage they had about five shots in a row. Franken saved them all.

I reckon 0-0 was a fair result — maybe Adelaide City wouldn't think so. All we've got to do now is put a few in next week at home. We'll probably get 20,000 back there. It'll help us get on top.

National Youth League

Compiled by Roy Hay and proudly sponsored by Prestige Wedding and Function Centre,
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JOEYS WORLD CUP LATEST

DI IORIO HITS HAT-TRICK AGAINST HAPLESS PNG

AUSTRALIA U17S 8
L Pantelis 14' pen, J Di Iorio 18' 23' 34',
D MacAllister 68', S Cansdell-Sherriff
78', S McDonald 80', J Johnson 85'
PAPUA NEW GUINEA 0

Joe Di Iorio has done fabulously well since coming on as a sub in the Joeys' first game against Fiji.

He scored one goal then and in Australia's second game he notched up a hat-trick in the 8-0 walkover against PNG yesterday in the U/17 World Cup qualifier currently being played in Fiji.

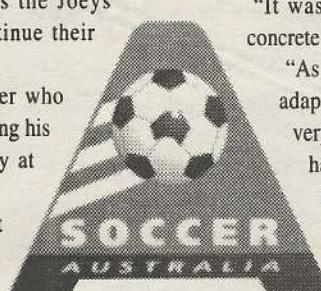
Playing in temperatures hovering around the low 30s, the 17 year old striker notched up goals in the 18th, 23rd and 34th minutes as the Joeys crushed their opposition to continue their unbeaten run.

Di Iorio is a former VIS player who regularly featured on this page during his time in Australia. He is currently at Werder Bremen.

Midfielder Lucas Pantelis put the Under-17s on the board with a penalty in the 14th minute, followed by Di Iorio's hat-trick before half time.

The 4-0 scoreline at the break was enhanced by Dylan MacAllister in the 68th, Shane Cansdell-Sherriff ten minutes later, second half replacement Scott McDonald in the 80th, and James Johnson five minutes from time.

Coach Les Scheinflug was pleased with his team's improving performance, but less than happy with the playing conditions on the Prince Charles Park in



JOEYS LINE-UP

JESS KEDWELL-VANSTRATTAN (GK),
SHANE CANSDELL-SHERIFF, AARON
GOULDING, STEVE LAURIE, MARK BYRNES
[C], RADOSLAV CULIBRK, LUCAS
PANTELIS (IAIN FYFE 65'), JAMES
JOHNSON, LOUIS BRAIN (SCOTT
MCDONALD 46'), DYLAN MACALLISTER
53, JOE DI IORIO, (FABIAN LETTIERI 48').

Nandi.

"It was like the boys were playing on a concrete jungle out there.

"As much as I try and help the players adapt to the conditions, it just makes it very difficult to play football when you have to take 30 seconds to control a bouncing ball.

"Still, the main thing for the boys to do in these conditions, particularly with a kick-off under the midday sun, is to conserve as much energy as possible, while still winning the game, which we did today."

The Joeys next opponent is the Cook Islands in the third of their group games on Wednesday 5 May; last Saturday, the Australian Under-17s beat host nation Fiji 2-1 (see match report page two).

LEADING NORTHERN SCORERS

Mark Haggard	Marconi	24
Kev Gulesserian	AIS	21
Simon Catanzaro	NSWIS	20
Daniel Kukucka	Sydney United	16

Note: Apart from goals in matches played this week, the goalscorers as given here are from Soccer Australia official data.

LEADING SOUTHERN SCORERS

Andrew Mashoian	South Melb	17
Deniz Ekici	Carlton	15
Tony Ouliaris	Carlton	13

Angelo Motsopoulos VIS 10

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NORTHERN DIVISION

Elimination Semi-Final

Saturday 2 May 1999

Northern Spirit 1 (Ryan Griffiths) Newcastle Breakers 0



League Ladder

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
AIS	28	20	7	1	103	19	67
Sydney Olympic	28	20	4	4	89	30	64
Northern Spirit	28	20	2	6	68	24	62
Newcastle Breakers	28	18	5	5	62	29	59
Marconi Fairfield	28	17	5	6	78	26	56
NSWIS	28	17	3	8	69	33	54
Wollongong Wolves	28	17	2	9	85	35	53
QAS	28	15	2	11	72	44	47
Sydney United	28	12	4	12	59	48	40
Marconi Fairfield Colts	28	8	5	15	35	48	29
ACTAS	28	7	3	18	38	73	24
Northern Spirit Colts	28	4	3	21	23	102	15
Sydney Olympic Academy	28	3	5	20	26	99	14
Sydney United Colts	28	4	1	23	29	97	13
Wollongong Wolves Colts	28	1	3	24	15	142	6



SOUTHERN DIVISION

Elimination Semi-Final

Saturday 1 May 1999

VIS 1 (Angelo Motsopoulos) Gippslands Falcons 3 (Robert Puca 2, Antony Pardo)

Preliminary Semi-Final

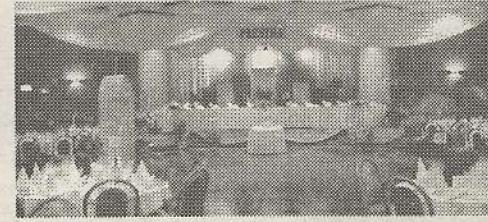
Sunday 2 May 1999

Carlton 3 (Tony Ouliaris 2, Dusko Delic) South Melbourne 2 (Tass Psonis, own goal)

League Ladder

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Carlton	24	17	4	3	72	26	55
South Melbourne	24	14	3	7	44	25	45
VIS	24	11	6	7	47	33	39
Gippsland Falcons	24	10	4	10	43	34	34
Melbourne Knights	24	9	3	12	44	53	30
Bulleen Inter Kings	24	8	5	11	29	44	29
Albury Wodonga	24	1	3	20	20	84	6

(Games not played recorded as 0-0)



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QUEENSLAND

KELLY JOINS THE OLYMPIC TEAM



Queensland Soccer Federation's State Director of Coaching, Peter Kelly, has accepted a lucrative job in Sydney with the Australian Soccer Federation.

Kelly will become Soccer Australia's High Performance Manager with the Olyroos, working hand-in-hand with coach Raul Blanco.

The job is a shift away from his background in coaching, with Kelly taking a more administrative role with the Olyroos.

He will work closely with Blanco, overseeing Australia's preparation for the Sydney Olympics.

The lure of being involved with the Olympic Games was a huge attraction for Kelly, who has selflessly devoted 14 years full-time to soccer in Queensland as a coach.

His move continues a tradition of Queensland soccer identities accepting prominent positions within Soccer Australia.

Kelly follows in the footsteps of the likes of Ian Brusasco AM, Alan Vessey, Guido Canale BEM and Wallace Dann who have held high profile positions with SA.

Previous State Directors of Coaching such as Jim Selby and Bruce Stowell have also gone on to higher honours.

"I felt it was time for a change," Kelly said.

"It's not every day you get to go to the Olympic Games."

"That's going to be a big thing and a highlight."

Kelly has seen Queensland soccer go through some amazing changes over the past 14 years.

The good-natured coach has had a front row seat as the Queensland Academy of Sport program has taken root, Identification Talent Clinics have

BRISBANE CITY	- Spencer Park, Newmarket
BRISBANE LIONS	- Lions Stadium, Richlands
BUNDABERG WAVES	- Thabeban Sports Complex, Bundaberg
GOLD COAST CITY	- Southport SC, Ashmore
IPSWICH KNIGHTS	- Eric Evans Reserve, Bundamba
MT GRAVATT	- Dittmer Park, Mt Gravatt
ROCHEDALE ROVERS	- Underwood Park, Rochedale
TARINGA ROVERS	- Jack Speare Park, Indooroopilly
TOOWOOMBA RAIDERS	- Gold Park, Toowoomba
WYNNUM	- Carmichael Park, Tingalpa

picked out outstanding young Queensland players and coaching levels have been restructured.

He can leave safe in the knowledge that the structure is in place for Queensland soccer to go into year 2000 and beyond.

Dann, Queensland Soccer Federation president, was delighted for Kelly, saying the QSF would never stand in the way of one of its products going on to higher honours.

"We're very pleased for Peter and naturally wish him well in the future," Dann said.

"Peter has done a terrific job and I have no doubt he will be a valuable asset in Australia's quest for international football recognition at the Olympic Games."

Ask him to pick a highlight of his career in Queensland and Kelly struggles to find just one.

"I think it is just doing something you love," Kelly said.

"I don't think many people can go to work and say they love doing what they do."

"I have met a lot of people over the years and it has given me the chance to do something like this."

"I think I have been lucky because I have had such a good coaching staff through the state."

While the standard of coaching has gone ahead in leaps and bounds, Kelly would like to see Queensland Soccer consider restructuring its competition to get the country areas more involved.

The Premier League has expanded in recent years but Kelly would like to see the competition involve teams from further north.

He would like to see a north and south Premier League with the top four in each competition to play in a finals series.

He starts his new position on April 23 and admits to champing at the bit as the Sydney Olympics begin to gather momentum.

The Queensland Soccer Federation is advertising the position nationally this week with applications being invited from suitable people who hold Soccer Australia Level 3 coaching qualifications and ACC accreditation.

Rochedale Rovers overtook arch rivals Brisbane Lions to lead the Queensland premier league following a 3-1 win in a top of the table fitter at Lions Stadium on Sunday.

The scoreline was a flattering outcome in a game which failed to reach any great heights and only came to life in the last 15 minutes when Lions trailed 2-0.

Lions' coach Miron Bleiberg again caused a sensation from the kickoff relegating striker Greg Di Losa and veteran Frank Mengotti to the bench in a decision which had many at the ground wondering.

Whether it was a tactical decision to bench the pair or not their late appearance almost snatched Lions the equaliser in the dying minutes before Rochedale added their third deep into injury time through veteran striker Keiran Cooper.

To say the first half lacked fire would be an understatement but it was best summed up by a spectator who said midway through the first half to wake him at fulltime as he curled up for a snooze.

The first half would have to be one of the worst 45 minutes of football this writer has seen this season as both sides got bogged down in a midfield battle resulting in only two serious shots on goal.

Rochedale striker Clayton Koch, easily the class player on the park, broke the dreary first half deadlock four minutes from time controlling a chip from defender Ross Davidson into space past a defender near the 18 metres before

drilling his shot past Lions' keeper Jason Lucas.

Rochedale fans thought they had a second one minute from the break when Koch headed down into the path for workhorse Matt Olley to tap in before being recalled for offside by referee John Peacock.

Rochedale gained some valuable breathing space four minutes after the resumption when David Pilic extended their lead to two in one of the game's best moves.

Koch started the move laying off to Pilic who played a one-two with Olley before the striker slotted home from an acute angle next to the upright.

Rochedale's second goal forced Bleiberg to bring on Di Losa in the 53rd minute and many were wondering whether it was too late.

Di Losa, with his blinding runs, made an immediate impact as he started to tear into the Rochedale defence.

After Mengotti joined Di Losa midway through the second half, Lions suddenly transformed into a more penetrating outfit against a leg weary Rochedale defence.

It took another of Lions' elder statesman, Steve Jackson to bring the homeside back into the game when pushed forward from sweeper into midfield where he ghosted into the box for a header in the 82nd minute.

The goal set the scene for a thrilling final eight minutes as Lions surged forward in search of the equaliser and a chance to stay at the top of the premier league table.

However, Rochedale went closest to scoring next, one minute from normal time when Pilic header a Koch cross into Cooper's path who muffed two close range chances to score.

On the ensuing break and one minute into time added on Lions' Warren Allen put Mengotti into space in front of an open goal but from 18 metres his left foot shot sailed over the bar.

Cooper, who came out of a one year retirement this season, wrapped up the match for the visitors two minutes

later when a ricochet fell to his feet enabling him to run 20 metres before drawing Lucas to slot home Rochedale's third.

In other matches over the Brisbane long weekend Taringa Rovers came back from two goals down at half time to draw 2-all away with Brisbane City.

Brisbane City went to the break in a commanding position following first half goals from Damien Waugh and Mark Battistin but the young Taringa players refused to throw in the towel in a spirited second half comeback.

Ben Wood and Steve Dawe scored Taringa's which keeps them in the top four on 18 points ahead of Brisbane City on goal differences.

At Ashmore former Queensland striker Peter Dwyer celebrated his signing with the Gold Coast to land a double in their 5-nil thumping over Mt Gravatt while Bundaberg and Wynnum shared the points in a 2-all draw in Bundaberg on Saturday night.

Gold Coast's three remaining goals came from Troy Greenwood and Ian Hutchinson while Mt. Gravatt's only goal was in their own net.

The final fixture between third placed Ipswich Knights and bottom placed Toowoomba was scheduled for Monday.

ROUND 13

15-05	Mt Gravatt	v	Ipswich Knights	7.00pm
15-05	Rochedale Rov	v	Gold Coast	7.00pm
16-05	Toowoomba Utd	v	Brisbane City	2.45pm
16-05	Wynnum	v	Brisbane Lions	2.45pm
16-05	Taringa Rovers	v	B'berg Waves	2.45pm

QUEENSLAND RESULTS AND TABLES

XXXX LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pts
Rochedale Rov	12	8	0	4	31	18	13	24
Brisbane Lions	12	7	2	3	31	20	11	23
Taringa Rovers	12	5	3	4	20	13	7	18
IPSW Knights	10	6	0	4	16	13	3	18
Brisbane City	12	5	3	4	19	17	2	18
Gold Coast	11	3	6	2	18	18	0	15
B'berg Waves	12	4	3	5	19	20	-1	15
Wynnum	12	4	2	6	19	25	-6	14
Mt Gravatt	12	3	3	6	20	30	-10	12
Toowoomba Utd	11	1	2	8	8	27	-19	5

ROUND 12 SCORES

Brisbane City	.....2	Taringa Rovers	.....2
Gold Coast	.....5	Mt Gravatt	.....0
B'berg Waves	.....2	Wynnum	.....2
Brisbane Lions	.....1	Rochedale Rov	.....3

IPSW Knights v Toowoomba Utd (Played Monday)

DIVISION ONE SOUTH

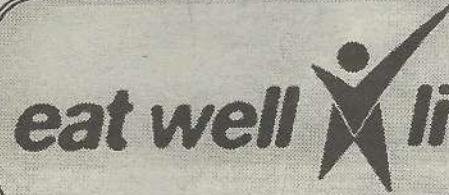
Rocklea Utd	11	10	1	0	44	13	31	31
Capalaba	11	8	0	3	23	12	11	24
Souths Utd	10	4	3	3	20	11	9	15
Slacks Creek	11	4	3	4	24	27	-3	15
Inala City	11	4	1	6	19	30	-11	13
Olympic Utd	10	4	0	6	20	22	-2	12
Beenleigh	10	3	2	5	17	23	-6	11
Redlands Utd	11	2	3	6	13	29	-16	9
Acacia Ridge	11	1	3	7	13	26	-13	6

ROUND 11 SCORES

Rocklea Utd	.....3	Redlands Utd	.....0
Acacia Ridge	.....0	Inala City	.....1
Capalaba	.....1	Beenleigh	.....0
Souths Utd	.....1	Slacks Creek	.....1
Olympic Utd v Bye			

DIVISION ONE NORTH

North Star	**10**	**8**	**0**	**2**	**32**



PREMIER LEAGUE



GULLY OUTMUSCLES LOCAL RIVALS

ST ALBANS 0 GREEN GULLY 1

By Ivan Perkov

The local derby which often produces more bruises than goals, lived up to its adage as "hard fought". Green Gully won 1-0, taking all three points in a game that should have ended in a draw.

The Saints started the stronger of the two, when as early as the 2nd minute, St Albans marksman, Harry Karl, had a fantastic opportunity to score but was denied by Cavaliers keeper Robert Brian. The cross-shot was expertly stopped.

St Albans pressured the Cavaliers and on all occasions were denied by Brian, but Gully came back stronger towards the end of the half and had some chances of their own.

Brandon Vassallo, Zlatko Donev and Nick Papadopoulos all had chances but were simply not up to the task.

It was really a battle of the two midfielders, as both sets of players were playing a physical and scrappy style - long clearances and body-to-body play dominated the first half and indeed the match.

The second half continued with the niggling fouls that plagued the first, as both sides created chances at will.

It was in the 60th minute that former Melbourne Knight, Zoran Markovski, turned the game on its head; a solo run by the stopper ended in a shot (that resembled a pass), that Marijan Vunderl somehow failed to hold, fumbling the ball into the net.

From there the Saints looked set to equalise, but luck deserted them at times.

The Saints coach, Vid Horvat, was positive.

"It was a tough game, very hard to split the teams. This is a tough league and all the team are competitive. It is up to us, we can make this season a success."

Saints: Vunderl, Rados, Raspudic, Colina, Karl, Dragicevic (Saric), Razov, Rados, Sianidis, Vojtek (Klarica), Movric (Razov).

Cavaliers: Brian, Sevin, Azzopardi, Georgiadis, Douglas, Markovski, Vassallo, Papadopoulos, Atanasovski (Svigos), Suric (Donev), Genovesi.

Referee: Nestor Zachariadis

Votes: 3: Markovski (GG), 2: Rados (St A), 1: Brian (GG).

SPRINGVALE WE 3 ALTONA EAST 3

By Milan Ninovic

A goal three minutes into stoppage time earned Altona East a 3-3 draw with Springvale White Eagles on Sunday.

Springvale, in the relegation zone and desperate for points, watched a crucial victory slip away after they were twice pegged back after leading by two goals.

Eric Styczen gave the home side the lead after 15 minutes after being found by a long Dejan Rikanovic pass.

That lead was doubled four minutes before half time when Igor Mandic's low, hard cross was unluckily diverted into his own net by Phoenix defender John Dimitrelos.

Altona cut the lead to one goal ten minutes into the second stanza when Nick Papadopoulos somehow managed to squeeze his shot in through a sea of players in the penalty area.

The White Eagles' two goal buffer was restored ten minutes later with a fantastic goal from midfielder Sasa Nikolic who beat Phoenix keeper Sam Frangos with a shot from 25 metres that struck the bar and went in.

George Angelos then made sure of a grandstand finish with his 77th minute strike from outside the box that deflected off a Springvale should have had game well and truly wrapped up by now by only had themselves to blame when they conceded the late equaliser when Papadopoulos again found the net from close range.

White Eagles: Simic, Mlinar, Oter, Cohadzic (Stojanac), Poutakidis, Styczen, Nikolic, Gacovski, Rikanovic, Mihajlovic, Mandic.

Phoenix: Frangos, Antoniadis, Kapulica, De Amicis, Dimitrelos, Catalano (Davis), Groidis

(Schwal), Bartol, Papadopoulos, Catalano (Petrovski), Angelos.

Referee: Hakan Anaz

Votes: 3: Gacovski (SWE), 2-Papadopoulos (AE), 1-Mandic (SWE)

SUNSHINE 0 BENTLEIGH 3

By John Rigas

Sunshine Georges fell into further turmoil with another heavy defeat on Sunday, this time 0-3 to the high scoring Bentleigh Greens at Chaplin Reserve.

Bentleigh controlled the game right from the outset and it came as no surprise when striker Juan Nilo drew first blood when he latched on to a cross from Harry Micheil on the half-hour mark.

Nilo, playing against his former club, was in the action again with strikes in the 49th and 55th minutes that narrowly missed the target.

Substitute John Papettas should have increased Bentleigh's lead when he headed wide in the 60th minute.

The Nilo show continued in the 64th minute when he rose above the Georgies defence to easily head past goalkeeper Steve Wardle. Nilo found time to complete his hat-trick when he expertly beat Wardle with a powerful strike from 18 metres after 85 minutes.

He found the back of the net a fourth time, but celebrations were cut short when he was adjudged offside.

Georgies: Wardle, Bot Rozanitis, Kanesoulis, Debono, Recchia (Barbieri), Allain (Elvin), Hermosilla, Opazo, Kathopoulos, Stojanovski (De La Plaza).

Greens: Clarke, Kapapatsos (Papettas), Micheil, McDonagh, Constantine, Drakos, Kourkoutzelos, Nilo (Lenetis), Rossios, Mladenovic (Pino), Kalimeris.

Referee: Dominic Barba

Votes: 3: Nilo (BG), 2: Micheil (BG), 1: Constantine (BG).

ALTONA MAGIC 0 FAWKNER 2

By Dwight Tuffnell

Fawkner's steady improvement over recent weeks continued on Sunday, with a 2-0 win over Altona Magic at Paisley Park.

It was the Blues' fifth straight win, a far cry from the beginning of the season when they languished at the bottom of the table.

In a fairly uneventful first half, the Magic would have regretted not making more of the few opportunities that came their way. Zoran Todorovski missed the chance of the half after 11 minutes when, just five metres out and keeper Maurice Gonzalez to beat, he rushed his shot and skied it into the car park.

Fawkner were a little nervy in defence, unlucky not to be punished by some careless mistakes. Todorovski wasted another chance shortly before half time, but in the second half, it was all Fawkner.

After missing those two or three chances, it was ironic that a Magic player would score Fawkner's first goal.

Josip Biskic sent the speedy Santo Emmanuel clear and his cross, intended for Peter Psarros, was guided into his own set by Markovski.

John Grimaud and Psarros came close to adding another goal before Emmanuel sealed the points in the 75th minute.

Biskic was again involved, finding substitute Tamer Simsek whose cross was slotted into the corner by Emmanuel.

Magic: McGrath, Velkovski, Tasevski, Ristevski (Bozinovski), Micevski, Markovski, Trajelevski (Cergovski), Petrevski, Trifunov, Todorovski, Sapazovski.

Blues: Gonzalez, Collins, Grimaud, Ferrante, Schipano, Ferrante, Bordignon, Biskic (Alexopoulos), Duzel (Di Sauro), Emmanuel, Psarros.

Referee: Alan Contini

Votes: 3: Schipano (FB), 2: Grimaud (FB), 1: Emmanuel (FB).

SHARKS BITE BACK

BULLEEN INTER 0 PORT MELBOURNE 4

By Kevin Christopher

Port Melbourne returned to the winning circle after a couple of unfavourable results, beating a lacklustre Bulleen outfit 4-0.

The Kings were never in the game, with the Sharks re-establishing themselves as the competition pacesetters as we approach the half-way mark of the season.

From the very beginning Port Melbourne dominated proceedings, producing a workman-like performance at the back, couple with a great interchange of flowing football through the middle. They were 1-0 ahead in the second minute of the game when Peter Kakos converted a free kick on the edge of the box after he was fouled by Bulleen's Paul Della Rocca.

Kakos' pinpoint free kick, curled into the left hand side netting after a Jimmy Latinopoulos dummy, put the striker back on the score-sheet after a couple of weeks of inactivity.

The Sharks stretched this lead to a two goal cushion after 26 minutes when Nick Tsaltas provided a low cross to Kakos in the box after a darting run from the right hand side.

Kakos' shot deflected off a Bulleen defender and into the path of John Pappas, who duly converted from point blank range.

The turning point undoubtedly came in the 38th minute when referee Perry Mur sent off Bulleen's Danny Gnjidic after he showed dissent and abused the referee. From this point Bulleen were always chasing the game, having to come from behind with only Eric Hollingsworth as a real option up front.

Nothing changed in the second half as Port Melbourne continued to dictate the tempo of the game.

A Tommy Sonsini cross into the path of Kakos resulted in the Sharks' third goal, as Kakos coolly headed the ball over an advancing Sean Keogh.

Four minutes later the rout was complete as a good, patient build up by Port resulted in a much deserved goal to Tsaltas.

After this, the match petered out into a non-event, with both teams quite content to go through the motions.

Capably led by Roddy Vargas at the back, the Sharks were never threatened, with the Kings looking a shadow of the team that finished the last season as champions.



Sharks: Cooper, Knezevic, Fak, Tzirtis (Tsakos), Tsaltas, Palamaras, Vargas, Pappas, Latinopoulos (Heath), Kakos (Dimas), Sonsini.

Kings: Keogh, Everett, Della Rocca, Mazzini, Babic (Valentic), Waddell (Tartaglia), Gnjidic (sent off), Sherifovski (Stojcevski), Grbac, Hollingsworth, Rusmir.

Referee: Perry Mur
Votes: 3-Vargas (PM), 2-Tsaltas (PM), 1-Kakos (PM).



ROUND 12 DETAILS

Melbourne Raiders 1 (Cuculeski) - St Albans Saints 0
Green Gully Cavaliers 0 - Altona Magic 0

ROUND 13 DETAILS

Port Melbourne Sharks 4 - Bulleen Inter Kings 0, Springvale White Eagles 3 - Altona East 3, Sunshine Georgies 0 - Bentleigh Greens 3, Altona Magic 0 - Fawkner Blues 2, St Albans Saints 0 - Green Gully Cavaliers 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Port Melbourne Sharks	13	9	3	1	33	12	30
Green Gully Cavaliers	13	8	3	2	26	14	27
Preston Lions	12	8	0	4	27	16	24
Melbourne Raiders	12	6	3	3	18	16	21
Bentleigh Greens	13	5	5	3	27	15	20
Fawkner Blues	13	6	2	5	21	16	20
Altona East	13	4	4	5	15	20	16
Altona Magic	13	4	3	6	19	30	15
Bulleen Inter Kings	13	3	5	5	16	18	14
St Albans Saints	13	4	2	7	15	20	14
South Dandenong	12	3	4	5	19	22	13
Springvale White Eagles	12	3	4	6	18	23	13
Westvale	12	2	4	6	12	25	10
Sunshine Georgies	13	2	2	9	12	31	8

ROUND 14 FIXTURES

Saturday May 8

South Dandenong v Bulleen Inter Kings - Kick off 3pm at George Andrews Reserve.

Sunday May 9

St Albans Saints v Fawkner Blues - Kick off 3pm at Churchill Reserve

Altona Magic v Bentleigh Greens - Kick off 3pm at Paisley Park

Sunshine Georgies v Altona East - Kick off 3pm at Chaplin Reserve

Springvale White Eagles v Preston Lions - Kick off 3pm at Serbian Sports Centre

Monday May 10

Melbourne Raiders v Green Gully Cavaliers - Kick off 8.15pm at Epping Soccer Stadium

Westvale v Port Melbourne Sharks - Kick off 8.15pm at Knights Stadium



DIABETES AUSTRALIA Victoria

VICTORIAN LEAGUES



CRAZY JOHN'S STATE LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Heidelberg United	5	5	0	0	15	5	15
Oakleigh	6	5	0	1	9	3	15
Lalor United	5	4	0	1	11	3	12
Nth Geel. Warriors	6	3	2	1	8	5	11
Westgate	6	3	1	2	11	7	10
Melbourne City	6	3	0	3	11	15	9
Kingston City	6	3	0	3	7	11	9
Northcote City	6	2	1	3	14	9	7
Western Suburbs	6	2	1	3	9	9	7
Yarraville Glory	6	2	1	3	9	12	7
Doncaster Rovers	6	1	2	3	8	9	5
Richmond	6	1	2	3	7	12	5
Springvale City	6	1	1	4	3	13	4
Werribee City	6	0	1	5	5	14	1

DIVISION 1 - ROUND 6

Werribee City 2 Yarraville Glory 3
Westgate 4 Richmond 0
Doncaster Rovers 1 Oakleigh 2
Kings City 0 Northcote City 3
Western Suburbs 1 Northern Geelong Warriors 2
Springvale City 0 Melbourne City 3

ROUND 7 FIXTURES

Friday May 7
Oakleigh v Western Suburbs (kick off 8.30pm)
Saturday May 8
Yarraville Glory v Westgate
Sunday May 9
Melbourne City v Northcote City
Lalor United v Springvale City
North Geelong Warriors v Heidelberg United
Richmond v Doncaster Rovers
Werribee City v Kingston City



DIVISION 2 - ROUND 6

Geelong 2 - Thomastown/Regent 0
Diamond Valley United 2 - Cranbourne Comets 2
Altona City 2 - Ringwood City 3
Frankston Strikers 2 - Knox City 3
Old Scotch Waverley 0 - East Richmond 3
Croydon City Arrows 2 - Frankston Pines 3
Satellite City Rovers 0 - Essendon 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Frankston Pines	6	4	2	0	21	5	14
Essendon	6	4	2	0	12	1	14
Cranbourne Comets	6	3	3	0	14	7	12
Knox City	6	4	0	2	11	5	12
East Richmond	6	3	2	1	9	4	11
Geelong	6	3	2	1	11	10	11
Old Scotch Waverley	6	3	0	3	9	10	9
Thomastown/Regent	6	2	2	2	7	7	8
Altona City	6	2	1	3	5	11	7
Croydon City Arrows	6	1	1	4	5	10	4
Ringwood City	6	1	1	4	9	18	4
Satellite City Rovers	6	1	1	4	4	15	4
Frankston Strikers	6	0	3	3	4	11	3
Diamond V. United	6	0	2	4	9	16	2

ROUND 7 FIXTURES

Saturday May 8
Essendon v East Richmond
Frankston Pines v Satellite City Rovers
Thomastown/Regent v Croydon City Arrows
Knox City v Geelong
Ringwood City v Frankston Strikers
Cranbourne Comets v Altona City
Diamond Valley United v Old Scotch Waverley

DIVISION 3 - ROUND 6

South Wantirna 3 - Keilor Park 0
Williamstown 2 - Fitzroy City 4
South Springvale 1 - Broadmeadows City
Pascoe Vale 2 - Banyule City 0
Moreland City 5 - Bell Park 0
Stonnington City 6 - Mooroolbark 0



Laverton Park 2 - North Coburg United 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Stonnington City	6	5	0	1	17	6	15
Moreland City	6	4	1	1	16	8	13
South Wantirna	6	4	1	1	12	5	13
Williamstown	6	3	2	1	17	11	11
Fitzroy City	6	3	2	1	16	11	11
South Springvale	6	2	4	0	7	4	10
North Coburg United	6	2	2	2	10	8	8
Pascoe Vale	6	2	1	3	9	13	7
Keilor Park	6	1	2	3	9	12	5
Broadmeadows City	6	1	2	3	7	13	5
Bell Park	6	1	2	3	6	12	5
Mooroolbark	6	1	2	3	4	14	5
Banyule City	6	0	1	5	7	15	1

ROUND 7 FIXTURES

Saturday May 8

North Coburg United v Banyule City
Mooroolbark v Laverton Park
Bell Park v Stonnington City
Broadmeadows City v Moreland City
Fitzroy City v South Springvale
Keilor Park v Williamstown
South Wantirna v Pascoe Vale

DIVISION 4 - ROUND 6

Nunawading City 2 - Melton 5
Sandringham City 8 - Corio 1
Seaford United 3 - Keysborough 3
Lalor 0 - Croxton Park 0
Lyndale United 3 - Geelong Rangers 1
Clifton Hill United 1 - Langwarrin 2
Sunbury United 3 - Chelsea 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Langwarrin	6	6	0	0	21	5	18
Sandringham City	6	4	1	1	22	11	13
Croxton Park	6	3	3	0	16	9	12
Lyndale United	6	3	2	1	15	12	11
Lalor	6	3	1	2	13	13	10
Seaford United	6	3	1	2	11	14	10
Sunbury United	6	3	1	2	11	14	10
Sunbury United	6	3	0	3	9	8	9
Melton	6	2	2	2	10	10	8
Keysborough	6	2	1	3	14	11	7
Nunawading City	6	2	0	4	8	14	6
Clifton Hill United	6	1	1	4	11	16	4
Geelong Rangers	6	1	1	4	7	13	4
Corio	6	1	1	4	7	18	4
Chelsea	6	1	9	5	8	18	3

ROUND 7 FIXTURES

Saturday May 8

Chelsea v Croxton Park
Langwarrin v Sunbury United
Geelong Rangers v Clifton Hill United
Keysborough v Lyndale United
Corio v Seaford United
Melton v Sandringham City
Nunawading City v Lalor

PROVISIONAL LEAGUE

DIVISION 1 - ROUND 4

Templestowe Eagles 2 - Dandenong 3
North Sunshine Eagles 1 - Brunswick City 1
Monbulk 0 - Endeavour United 1
Springvale Condors 1 - Morwell Pegasus 0
Mitcham United 2 - South Caulfield 1

Sydenham Park 2 - Riversdale 4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Endeavour United	4	4	0	0	10	3	12
Brunswick City	4	3	1	0	6	3	10
Morwell Pegasus	4	3	0	1	10	2	9
Sydenham Park	4	2	1	1	11	8	7
Riversdale	4	2	1	1	8	5	7
Mitcham United	4	2	0	2	8	8	6
South Caulfield	4	1	1	2	9	11	4
Dandenong	4	1	1	2	6	8	4
North Sunshine Eagles	4	1	1	2	7	12	4
Springvale Condors	4	1	1	2	3	8	4
Monbulk	4	0	1	3	4	9	1
Templestowe Eagles	4	0	0	4	5	10	0

ROUND 5 FIXTURES

Saturday May 8

South Caulfield v Sydenham Park
Morwell Pegasus v Mitcham United
Endeavour United v Springvale Condors
Riversdale v Templestowe Eagles
Brunswick City v Monbulk
Dandenong v North Sunshine Eagles

DIVISION 2 NORTH WEST

- ROUND 4

Glenroy 1 - Mill Park 0
Broadmeadows United 2 - University of Melbourne 2
Hoppers Crossing 5 - Keon Park 1
Melbourne University 4 - Elwood City 2
Somerton City 0 - South Yarra 0
Ballarat 0 - Meadow Park 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts



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By Graham Cooke

OLYMPIC THROUGH BUT DEAKIN, MONARO WAIT IN VAIN

Canberra Olympic won through to its second WIN Television Federation Cup final in three years with a 4-1 win over Belconnen United, but it will have to wait to find its opponent in the May 16 final.

While both semi-finals were due to be played as a double header last Wednesday night, referee Ben Williams ruled the line markings at Greenway Oval were too faint for the opening game, between Olympic, and cup holder United, to begin.

By the time a marker was brought to the ground and the lines touched up it was almost an hour and a half after the scheduled kick-off time, and officials decided to postpone the second match, between Monaro and Canberra Deakin.

Olympic, keen to show its indifferent league form did not translate to the cup, went ahead in the fifth minute when striker Njegosh Popovich was fouled in the penalty box. Full back Takis Arvanitis drove the spot kick home.

Both teams were displaying additions to their squads from the Ericsson Cup. Alex Castro (Adelaide Sharks) had an immediate effect on Olympic's midfield as he began to spray out passes and set up moves.

Belconnen's Marko Perinovic (Gippsland Falcons) was less effective, sometimes taking too much upon himself as he tried to lead the United strike force.

Olympic went 2-0 up in the 37th minute. Elliott Zwangobani touched a free kick to Geoff Howarth and the former Belconnen player's shot ripped into the net

after taking a deflection off the defensive wall.

Perinovic gave his side some hope shortly after the interval when he pounced on the loose ball to score after goalkeeper Angelo Konstantinou had blocked a shot from Matt Whyte, but two goals in 90 seconds killed off the game.

First Popovich got up at the far post to nod home a Howarth corner kick, then the smallest and possibly busiest player on the field, Robbie Grande, sent Eli Salloum away, and the classy midfielder burned off the defence with sheer pace to complete the scoring.

Even from this apparently hopeless position Belconnen never gave up, and if it had converted just half of the chances it created in the last 20 minutes, might have taken the game to extra time.

However its finishing was anything but championship style, the worst offender being substitute Craig Unwin, who might have had a hat-trick in the 30 minutes he was on the field — but this was never going to be Belconnen's night.

Olympic coach Baz Giampaolo said Belconnen was the kind of club "which always comes at you right to the final whistle".

"Our main task tonight was to eliminate the errors at the back — we have been concentrating a little too much on offence in recent weeks," he said.

"It was never going to be a pretty game tonight, but with Eli Salloum and Geoff Howarth settling into their roles on the flanks, I think we are getting the formation right."

Ivo's Resurrection

Less than four months ago Ivo de Jesus was an unknown soccer refugee from an unsuccessful European venture, with limited prospects in the middle of the Ericsson Cup season.

Last week he was named Novell Canberra Cosmos' Player of the Year.

This remarkable turnaround in his fortunes resulted from a combination of good luck and timing. He joined Cosmos as new coach Tom Sermanni was taking over at the mid-point of the season when the club had yet to pick up its first point.

Under Sermanni, and with De Jesus claiming a regular spot in the side, the Canberra team accumulated 15 points with four wins and three draws — a modest enough performance by most standards, but riches beyond imagining compared with its earlier record.

It was, perhaps, not surprising that fans associated De Jesus with the revival. The attacking midfielder rose to second place on the club's scoring list behind Olyroo Peter Buljan and his no-nonsense, battling style quickly made him a crowd favourite.

He said after the presentation he benefited by joining the club when he did. "Some of the other players were a bit down and it took a while for them to snap out of it," he said.

"I wasn't so affected."

Not that he hadn't had his own share of setbacks. "I was playing for a second division club in Portugal, but the money wasn't good and I didn't feel happy there," he said.

"At that point I decided to get myself a manager and he suggested I give Europe a rest for a while and come back to see if I could do something in the remainder of the Ericsson Cup season.

"The Canberra offer was a challenge. I know their record was dreadful, but they were getting a new coach and trying to do something about it, so I thought it was worth a try."

Cosmos remains his number one choice for 1999-00. "I'll play in the NSW League during the winter, but for my old club, Dulwich Hill, rather than in the Superleague," he said.

"That way it will be less intense and I'll be fresher



Amarildo Miglietti ... Cosmos' Most Consistent Player of the Year.

when we start training for next season's Ericsson Cup."

The award for the most consistent player went to Portuguese sweeper Amarildo Miglietti who sadly, is almost certain to be missing from the line-up after a single season with the club.

"At this point it would be very difficult for me to come back," he said — a indirect reference to Cosmos' financial problems which will probably prevent it from having any overseas players in its squad next season.

"I will not be making any decisions for the moment...my priority is to go back to Portugal and be with my family."

He agreed the season just past had been one of the most "interesting" he had played. "Every year that goes by you learn something more," he said. "And I want to thank the supporters who have been very special to me."

"My only sadness is that we did not do so well — and personally that I did not score a goal. This is the first time I have failed to do that."

Buljan picked up a couple of titles — golden boot for the club's leading scorer, and players' player. Team manager Tony Borgia and club accountant Sue Lilley were named joint club persons of the year.

strikes of Weston Creek brothers Martin and Steve Lazzari.

***Tony Lemezina picked up a hat-trick for the Capital City Suns as they beat Queanbeyan City 5-1, while Matt Whyte also picked up three as his Belconnen United, coming off Wednesday night's Federation Cup loss to Olympic, took out their frustrations on the Burns Club to the tune of 7-0.

ACT PREMIER LEAGUE

Division 1

	P	W	SD	D	L	F	A	Pts
Belconnen Utd	4	4	0	0	0	10	1	12
Capital City Suns	4	3	0	0	1	11	5	9
Cooma	4	3	0	0	1	9	7	9
ANU	4	1	1	0	2	12	10	5
Belwest	3	1	1	0	1	8	9	5
White Eagles	4	1	1	0	2	6	7	5
Sabres FC	4	0	1	0	3	2	12	2
ADFA	3	0	0	0	3	3	10	0

Reserves: ANU 4 Belwest 0, Sabres FC 3 White Eagles 1, O'Connor Knights 2 Tuggeranong 5.

Points: Tuggeranong 12, O'Connor Knights 9, ANU 8, Cooma 6, Belwest 5, White Eagles 3, Sabres FC 3, ADFA 0.

ACT STATE LEAGUE

Division 1: Canberra City 3 Southern Spirit 1, ANU 4 University of Canberra 2, Burns Club 3 Valley Blues 1, Ginninderra Bye.

Division 2: Belwest 0 Ginninderra 3, Canberra City 2 Tuggeranong 1, ANU 1 University of Canberra 5, Burns Club 4 Valley Blues 3, Gungahlin Juventus 0 Belconnen United 3.

Division 3: University of Canberra 0 ADFA-II 4, Weston Creek Royals 0 Harmonie 2, University of Canberra-II 3 ADFA 1, Tuggeranong 1 ANU 0.

Division 4: Weston Creek Royals 2 Harmonie 1, University of Canberra 3 ANU-II 3, University of Canberra-II 3 ADFA 2, Burns Club 2 ANU 1.

Sunday May 9

Uni of Canberra v Canberra Deakin
University of Canberra Queanbeyan City v Gungahlin Juventus — *Riverside Stadium*

Weston Creek Royals v Belconnen United
Woden Park

Canberra Olympic v Monaro

O'Connor

First Grade 2pm. Under 23s noon. Under 19s 10am

Wednesday May 12

Burns Club v Capital City Suns

Greenway

WE HAVE A FUTURE — QUEANBEYAN CHAIRMAN

Queanbeyan City president Peter Gjorgievska has moved to counter mounting rumours his club is on the verge of collapse after three heavy losses in the Novell ACT Premiership.

"We have had a meeting with supporters and sponsors and I am pleased with the level of promised support," he said.

"Money has been pledged and I believe we will now begin to make progress."

"Our main problem is a lack of players, and I would ask anyone who has not yet signed for a club to consider coming to Queanbeyan."

Striker Bradley Smith scored one goal and set up another as Gungahlin Juventus notched up their first win of the 1999 ACT Premier League season with a 2-0 victory over Canberra Deakin at Deakin Oval on Sunday, reports Greg Welsh.

"This boy's a proven striker, young Bradley," said Juventus coach Billy Willox after the game. "His finishing was just superb."

With Smith just one of a number of players returning to the Juventus side, Willox is confident his team has now turned the corner on some indifferent early-season form.

"It's starting to come now," he said. "We've got the guys back and it gives me a bit more depth, it gives me a wee bit more variation and it gives my guys who have been playing under a losing team the confidence to come back under a winning team, and that's what I'm looking for."

Deakin, who have now scored just two goals from their opening four games, moved midfielder David Milin into the forward-line in place of the suspended Zoran Talevski, but relied upon talented wing-back Anthony Rakic to create most of their best chances in the first half.

Rakic proved too slippery for the Juventus defence on a number of occasions, and had two powerful strikes narrowly miss their target and another chance blocked by Juventus' keeper Elias Oikarinen.

Juventus striker George Cattanach almost conjured up a goal out of nothing in the 37th minute when he

seized upon a loose ball and struck from distance. His powerful low shot had Deakin keeper Pedro Pavez well beaten but rebounded off the post to leave the teams even at the break.

Juventus came out strongly in the second half and began to dominate the crucial midfield area, however it was the introduction of Smith in the 67th minute that proved the masterstroke.

Just six minutes later, Deakin sweeper Joseph Skrtic's poor clearance was intercepted by the Juventus striker, and he calmly struck a shot past the diving Pavez into the corner of the net.

Just eight minutes later Smith sent the hard-running Cattanach into the Deakin penalty box with a deft pass. Cattanach drove home with a powerful left-foot shot that left Pavez no chance.

Juventus coach Billy Willox was justifiably proud of his team's performance. "I thought we played really well," Willox said.

"We played a controlled game. They had a couple of chances but I think we played the football. I'm really pleased for the guys more than anything. We really needed a boost."

**Meanwhile in other games, a double-strike by Monaro's Alex Tine ensured that the points were shared against the unbeaten Weston Creek Royals at Riverside Oval.

Tine proved a "super-sub" for coach Ian Heywood, coming on with only thirty minutes remaining and with his side seemingly destined for a 2-0 loss. His goals in the 65th and 80th minutes cancelled out the earlier

Under 23: Belconnen United 3 Burns Club 0, Capital City Suns 9 Queanbeyan City 0, University of Canberra 2 Canberra Olympic 2, Canberra Deakin 0, Gungahlin Juventus 0, Monaro 2 Weston Creek Royals 2.

Under 19: Belconnen United 2 Burns Club 1, Capital City Suns 1 Queanbeyan City 1, Uni of Canberra 8 Canberra Olympic 0, Canberra Deakin 0, Gungahlin Juventus 4, Monaro 3 Weston Creek Royals 0.

Division 2

	P	W	SD	D	L	F	A	Pts
ANU	2	2	0	0	3	9	11	3
Sabres FC	2	1	0	1	2	5	3	3
O'Connor Knights	1	0	0	0	3	4	17	0

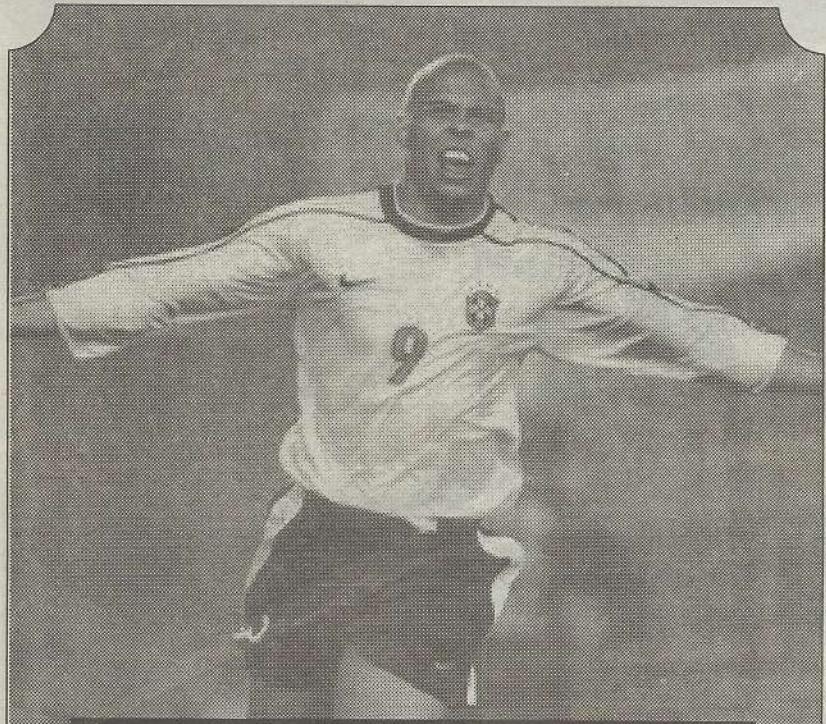
Under 23: Belconnen United 3 Burns Club 0, Capital City Suns 9 Queanbeyan City 0, University of Canberra 2 Canberra Olympic 2, Canberra Deakin 0, Gungahlin Juventus 0, Monaro 2 Weston Creek Royals 2.

Under 19: Belconnen United 2 Burns Club 1, Capital City Suns 1 Queanbeyan City 1, Uni of Canberra 8 Canberra Olympic 0, Canberra Deakin 0, Gungahlin Juventus 4, Monaro 3 Weston Creek Royals 0.

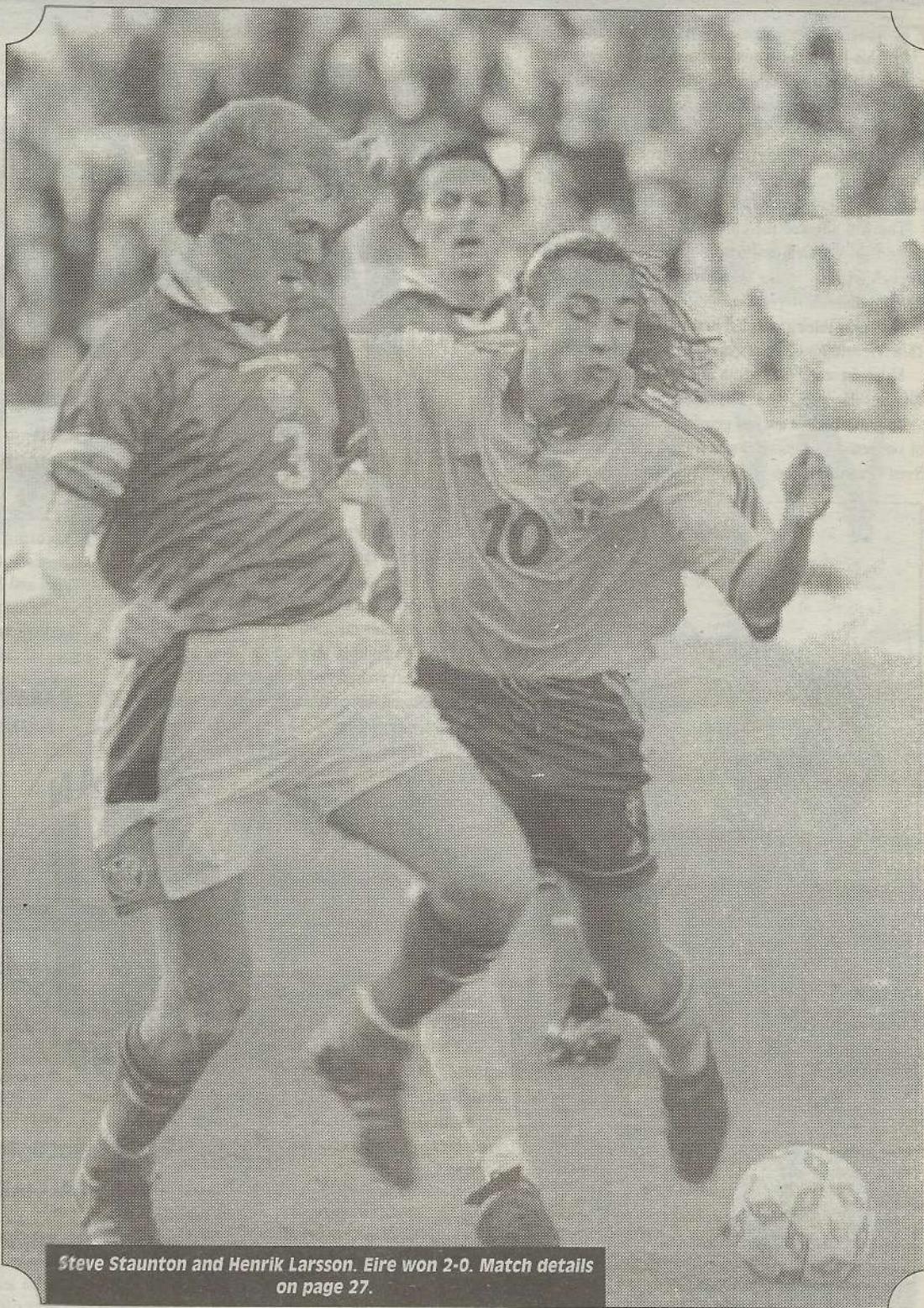
Division 2

	P	W	SD	D	L	F	A	Pts
ANU	2	2						

THE WEEK IN THE GLOBAL GAME SPONSORED BY THE FOUR DIEGOS RADIO SHOW AND ADELAIDE'S COAST FM SOCCER



The now familiar "I can fly" approach to goal celebrations. Ronaldo scored for Brazil midweek against Barcelona.



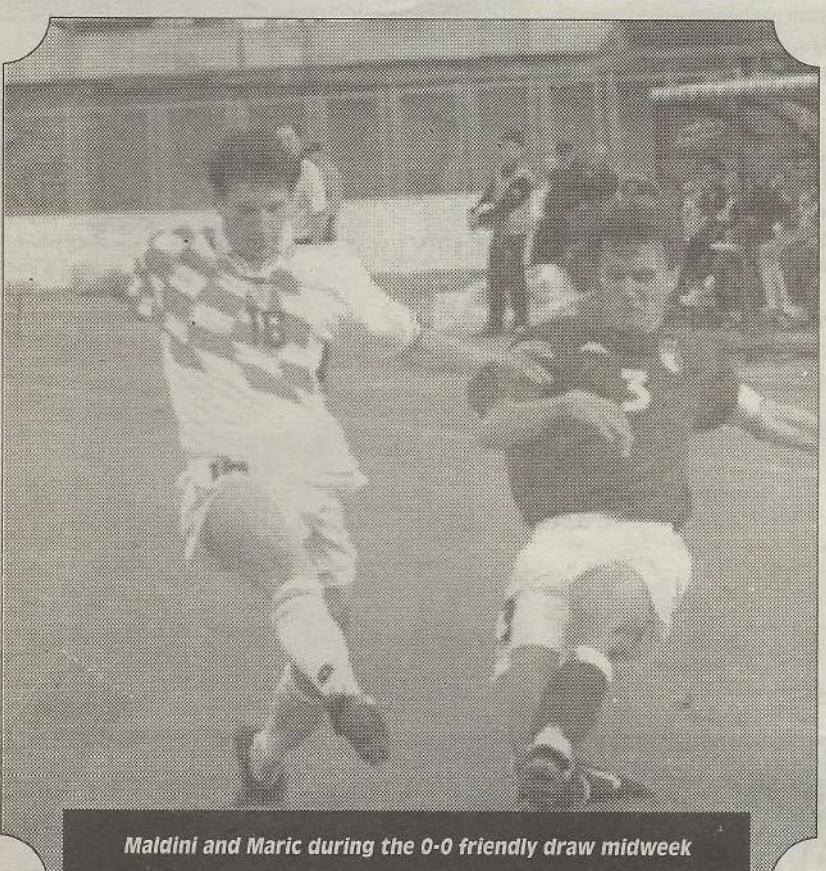
Steve Staunton and Henrik Larsson. Eire won 2-0. Match details on page 27.



Roy Hodgson tells the Inter players how it's going to be. Ivan Zamorano (ctr) looks suitably impressed. Italy is on page 24.



England's Wes Brown (in new England kit) during the 1-1 draw in Hungary midweek.



Maldini and Maric during the 0-0 friendly draw midweek

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ITALY

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They'll be buying Mauricio Ganz the vino after his last minute goal, off a deflection, gave AC Milan a valuable 3-2 win over Sampdoria, putting the Milanese within one point of Lazio.

Milan stretched its unbeaten streak to eight games, but not before struggling all afternoon against a Sampdoria side that is 17th in the 18-team league and played the entire second half with 10 men!

The win allowed the club to keep pace with first-place Lazio, which easily accounted for Udinese 3-0 through goals by Simisa Mihajlovic, Christian Vieri and Roberto Mancini.

With only three games left in the season, Lazio has an 18-8-5 record for 62 points, and Milan is 17-10-4 for 61.

Milan, in search of its fifth title of the 1990s, plays at Juventus this week, while Lazio hosts Bologna.

"It looks like we are just going to be forced to win all of our remaining games," said a dead-pan Lazio coach Sven Goran Eriksson, whose team's lone league cham-



Edmundo ... the errant Brazilian actually scored for Fiorentina.

ampionship came 25 years ago.

In other action on Sunday, Fiorentina flogged Perugia 5-1; AC Parma edged out Serie B-bound Empoli 1-0; Salernitana shocked Juventus 1-0; Bari beat Piacenza 3-1; Cagliari topped Bologna 3-1, and Vicenza beat Venezia 2-1.

GANZ HITS LAST GASP WINNER AT SAMP

In the race for Champions League berths next season, Fiorentina stayed in third place with 54 points. Parma is next with 52, followed by AS Roma, Juventus and Udinese with 48 each.

Roma hosted Internazionale of Milan in a game moved to Monday night because Sunday's papal beatification of a mystic monk at the Vatican had been expected to draw thousands of visitors to Rome and make access to the stadium difficult.

At Milan, Sampdoria levelled the score at 2-2 with four minutes left courtesy of Marco Franceschetti's first goal of the season, but as the last seconds of the five minutes of injury time ticked away, Ganz popped up with his winner, much to the chagrin of La Samp.

The striker, starting in place of suspended George Weah, took the ball off a corner kick and fired a left-footed shot from the edge of the box. The ball hit Samp defender Marcello Castellini's hand on its way into the net.

It was a dramatic finish to a thrilling match with Milan coming back twice.

The hosts went up 1-0 in the 17th minute, when midfielder Massimo Ambrosini — who made his national team debut in Italy's 0-0 draw at Croatia on Wednesday — slammed a cracking shot just inside the left post.

It was Ambrosini's first goal since November 1997.

Sampdoria lost French defender Saliou Lassissi at the end of the first half when he was red-carded for a last-man foul on Ganz after losing the ball to the striker.

Despite the disadvantage, Sampdoria made it 1-1 in the 59th from Vincenzo Montella's header off a corner kick.

Milan appeared to have won the game with 12 minutes to go through substitute playmaker Leonardo's free kick, which nestled into the upper corner of the net. Franceschetti's goal leveled the score again, and set the scene for Ganz's heroics and some wild celebrations.

LAZIO UDINESE

3
0

At Udine, Yugoslav defender Mihajlovic opened the scoring with a penalty kick in the 29th after Mancini was fouled by defender Valerio Bertotto.

Vieri and Mancini then added to the lead with headers in the 48th and 57th, respectively.

Lazio picked up its record eighth road win of the season.

PARMA EMPOLI

1
0

Croatia's Mario Stanic scored from Diego Fuser's free kick eight minutes into the game in Parma, and the hosts broke a five-match winless run. Empoli is already in Serie B next year.

SALERNITANA JUVENTUS

1
0

Marco Di Vaio tapped in the winner in the 38th for Salernitana on the Amalfi Coast. Juventus ended the game with nine players after defenders Zoran Mirkovic and Mark Iuliano were sent off on a very black day for the Turin side.

BOLOGNA CAGLIARI

1
3

In Bologna, Fabian O'Neill, rookie defender Fabio Macellari and Patrick Mboma hit the target as Cagliari had a 3-1 lead inside 46 minutes and watched the hosts fall apart with two red cards in the second half.

BARI PIACENZA

3
1

In the Southern port city of Bari, it was no holiday for Piacenza as the home side, after having Osmanovski



Christian Vieri ... the Big V scored for Lazio in its three nil win.

red carded, broke a 1-1 deadlock with goals from South African striker Phil Masinga in the 84th from a header.

They delivered the coup de grace to the red shirts of Piacenza with Rodolfo Giorgetti scored just before the end.

VENEZIA VICENZA

1
2

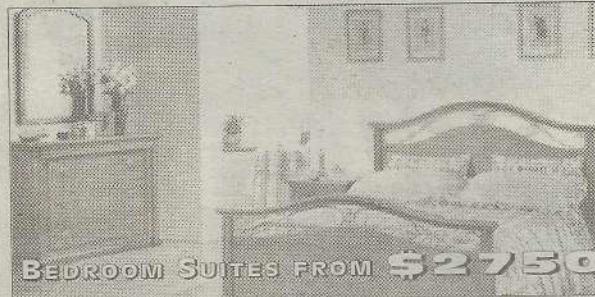
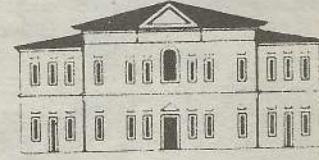
In beautiful Venice, in the battle of the Vs, Uruguayan striker Marcelo Otero netted both goals as Vicenza notched its first road win since December 1997 against a very disappointing Venetian outfit.



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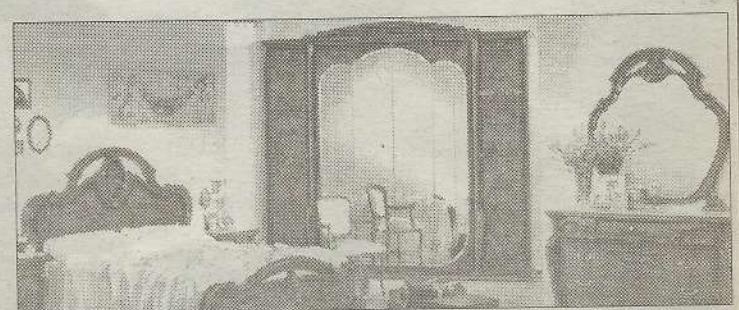


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EUROPE

Soccer Weekly

TOP CLUBS FINED OVER BRAWL

Italian club Bologna and France's Marseille paid a hefty price for the brawl which took place at the end of their UEFA Cup semifinal second leg match last week. European soccer's governing body fined the two clubs more than \$180,000 over the incident.

UEFA spokesman Massimo Gonnella said a fine of 150,000 Swiss francs (\$99,000) would be imposed on Bologna and three players would be suspended, while Marseille would be fined 125,000 Swiss francs (\$82,500) and two players would be suspended.

Gonnella, speaking after a meeting in Geneva of UEFA's control and disciplinary body, also said Marseille coach Rolland Courbis faced a fine of 5,000 Swiss francs (\$3,300).

The coach's son Stephane, a member of the French club's backroom staff, would be suspended from official functions at UEFA club matches for a year.

Although the Italian club received the heftier fine, the decision does more immediate damage to Marseille.

Already missing several players for the final against Parma on May 12 because of suspensions, they are now deprived of two more.

Gonnella said Marseille's Christophe Dugarry and Hamada Jambay would be banned for five and four matches respectively.

Bologna's Amadeo Mangone would be banned for five

games, Giancarlo Marocchi would be suspended for four and Giampiero Maini for three matches, he said.

The match in Bologna on April 20 ended 1-1, sending Marseille through to the final thanks to their away goal. The first leg in France had finished 0-0.

As the players headed for the dressing room, Bologna fans threw firecrackers and oranges on to the pitch, prompting some of the Marseille players to shout at the supporters.

A Bologna player, identified as Mangone, threw a punch which started the fracas involving about six or seven players.

According to Bologna officials, Stephane Courbis punched Maini and left him with a badly swollen eye.

The UEFA spokesman said both clubs had the right to appeal against the punishments by May 2. He said the specific reasons for each penalty would not be made public for the moment but the clubs had been informed.

The disciplinary panel, meeting at a Geneva hotel, studied video evidence of the match and both clubs had been invited to make written submissions.

Gonnella said the disciplinary panel had also confirmed the suspensions for the final of Italian striker Fabrizio Ravanelli, midfielder Peter Luccin and defender William Gallas, who were all booked during the match against Bologna.



SEEDORF & ZIDANE: SET TO SWAP CLUBS?

European glamour clubs Juventus and Real Madrid have reportedly begun making deals regarding two of their biggest stars. Real's Clarence Seedorf and Juve's Zinedine Zidane are the two in the centre of negotiations which could see them swap clubs should the deal go ahead.

Real president Lorenzo Sanz and Juve vice-president Roberto Bettiga met in Barcelona ahead of the Catalan club's centenary match against Brazil, Spanish newspapers reported Thursday.

Top of the Juventus wish list is Seedorf, the 23-year-old Dutch international who has endured a difficult season at the Bernabeu.

Real rate Seedorf at 3,000 million pesetas (US\$19.16 million) but could be prepared to accept Uruguayan defender Paolo Montero in a player-plus-cash deal.

The Spanish club would also like to do a deal on world footballer of the year Zidane, although that would appear to be far more complicated.

The French World Cup winner last week pledged his immediate future to Juventus, contradicting reports that he would join a Spanish club next season.

But he reiterated that he does not want to

finish his playing career in Italy and Real is hoping Juventus will listen to offers sooner rather than later.

Real are prepared to offer Brazilian left back Roberto Carlos or Yugoslav striker Predrag Mijatovic plus around 2,000 million pesetas



Roberto Carlos:
He's being offered huge sums of money from Real Madrid

HARRY KEWELL'S TOO COOL TO STAY IN ENGLAND

Australia's own Harry Kewell, who has set the English Premier League alight with his skillful displays of late, has spoken about his future aspirations to play amongst Europe's elite in Spain or Italy.

The Australia winger has just signed a new contract at Elland Road but is believed to have demanded a get-out clause which will allow him to leave if a top club from Italy or Spain comes in for him.

Kewell said: 'People might think I've already reached the pinnacle of my profession by playing each week for Leeds in the Premier League.'

If that's the case, they'd be wrong. I've had a career-plan mapped out in my mind since I was a kid - and playing at the highest level in England is only part of it. Phase One is now complete, which at the age of just 20 is something that I'm pretty proud of.

'Now I've got my eyes fixed on Phase Two, the big leagues in Europe.'

Given Kewell's superb form this season in Leeds' charge towards a UEFA Cup place, it is merely a question of when, not if, one of Europe's leading clubs comes calling.

Juventus have already made an inquiry about him and are expected to step up their interest following their Champions League defeat by Manchester United.

The Italian club, known as The Old Lady, are in need of youthful legs as they begin a potentially painful rebuilding programme.

The news that one of his brightest young stars is intent on leaving Elland Road will concern Leeds manager David O'Leary, just when his team of superkids are poised to mount a serious challenge for the Premiership title in the next few seasons.

Kewell remains unrepentant, however, adding: 'It's always been a dream of mine to play for a top club in Italy or Spain before returning to England and then finishing my playing days in Australia.'

'Don't get me wrong, I've got three years of my contract at Leeds still to run and I'm happy there, but I've got a dream and I plan to turn it into reality. The thought of playing on the Continent remains a powerful lure to me. It's not just the money, it's the chance to pit yourself against the best technicians in world football and I've never had great respect for reputations.'

'I've heard there have been expressions of interest from the likes of Juventus and Roma. It's all very flattering, but I'm still learning the game. I've got a heap of improving to do if I'm to live up to the goals that I have set myself.'

'For one thing, I have to start scoring more. David

O'Leary has told me as much. I've banged in nine goals so far this season but he thinks I should have doubled that.'

Real Madrid's troublesome season continues with Brazilian winger Savio the latest player to complain about his treatment at the Spanish first division club.

Savio, who follows Predrag Mijatovic and Clarence Seedorf in publicly airing grievances this week, says he is getting tired of life on the sidelines.

The quicksilver Brazilian, who was outstanding in the early part of the season, has failed to hold down a regular first team place since Christmas, with both Guus Hiddink and his successor John Toshack preferring to use him as a substitute.

That lack of action has seen him fail in his bid to break back into the Brazil national squad and the 25-year-old says he will have to consider his Real future if he is still not playing at the end of the season.

'I always have to play at the highest level to stay in the team,' Savio complained, 'while some of my team mates can play for or five bad games and still stay in the side.'

'I'm very happy here (in Madrid) but I can't be happy in sporting terms if I'm spending six months on the substitutes bench.'

'If I don't get more opportunities in a few months I'll have to think again about what is best for me.'

'I'm being patient but I have to know if I'm valued here. If I'm not then there's no point staying.'

Earlier this week, Yugoslav striker Mijatovic said he was unhappy at being substituted too often while Toshack was forced to tell Seedorf to knuckle down after the Dutchman complained about being played out of position.

Eduardo Van Der, Ajax's international goalkeeper is set to leave the Netherlands at the end of the season. The Dutch national keeper, set to earn his 37th cap in a friendly against Morocco in Arnhem on Wednesday, will, in all likelihood, announce his intention to leave Ajax after the Dutch Cup Final on May 13 when his side faces Fortuna Sittard.

Van der Sar, a member of the Ajax side which won the European Cup in 1996, was widely quoted in England on Tuesday as saying he had already been approached by Manchester United, which is seeking a replacement for the departing Peter Schmeichel.

'A number of clubs have been in touch -- and United are one of them,' he is reported to have said.

But United manager Alex Ferguson denied any

approach.

'It is absolute nonsense. We have never been in touch with Ajax,' Ferguson told the Manchester Evening News.

'We are not close to signing any keeper at the moment. We have a couple we are thinking about but I haven't made up my mind yet. I also need to find out how much money we have available. I expect to know soon what I can spend.'

Italian league leader Lazio is among clubs believed to be interested in the Dutch goalkeeper.

Ajax confirmed it expects to discuss Van der Sar's future with the player next month.

'We are expecting him to speak to the club and the train-

The Brazilian former world player of the year said on Tuesday that he accepted being heckled after last Sunday's 3-1 home defeat by Udinese but that the violence which followed the match in Milan was intolerable.

Ronaldo's car was hit by a bottle thrown by a fan as it was leaving the San Siro Stadium. His parents, sister and nephew were also in the car but no one was hurt.

Inter issued a statement on Monday evening, deplored the fans who threw stones and bottles at players' cars:

'Violence is absolutely unacceptable. The club points out that a few hooligans fortunately are not representative in any way of Inter fans as a whole.'



Ronaldo and Van Der Sar in action at last year's World Cup

ers, then reach a decision, probably after the Cup Final,' an Ajax spokesman said.

Ajax says Van der Sar, who is under contract until July 2002, has had talks with the board in the past week or two. If he went he would leave Ajax without a single current Dutch international on its books.

Superstar Ronaldo was the target of attacks from angry fans of Inter Milan and has suggested that should this behaviour continue, he may well leave the club.

Ronaldo said that he had not yet thought of leaving Inter, but added: 'The future is something that is planned day by day, experience after experience. And every good intention must always be confirmed by the facts.'

Inter, which has had a nightmare season, is in ninth place and may not qualify for a European competition next season when former Juventus coach Marcello Lippi takes over.

Until then, it has recalled former coach Roy Hodgson for the remaining handful of games this season.

Compiled by

EUROPE

Soccer Weekly

EURO LEAGUES HIGHLIGHTS

Nantes have done a Sydney United, getting to the Cup Final with a bunch of inexperienced kids and a no-name squad.

The west coast club meet second division Sedan in the final at the Stade de France on May 15 after beating Nimes 1-0 in their semi-final.

Ten members of the current Nantes outfit were in the youth squad as recently as 1996.

"There are players who will never take part in a final in their careers, so to start like this is marvellous," 20-year-old goalkeeper and captain Mickael Landreau said on Thursday.

Players like Patrick Suffo, Mickael Landreau, Olivier Monterrubio and Sébastien Piocelle were all in the Gambardella (French youth) Cup final at the Parc des Princes three years ago.

The youngsters are steadied by veteran defenders Nestor Fabbri and Eric Decroix, who is the only player remaining from the 1995 league championship winning team, which went on to reach the European Cup semi-finals.

Cash-strapped Nantes have built and sold off two teams in the second half of the decade to help balance their books.

Having nurtured World Cup winners Marcel Desailly and Didier Deschamps, they dismantled their 1995 side with the transfers of French internationals Christian Karembeu, Patrice Loko, Nicolas Ouedec, Reynald Pedros and Benoit Caquet.

Since then other big names have also moved on.

Nantes delved into the Argentine market last year, as they have done regularly for many seasons, and signed 31-year-old Fabbri from Boca Juniors.

A South American Supercup winner with Racing Club as a 20-year-old, Fabbri will be taking part in his second French final.

Near the end of this season Nantes stand seventh in the league, an improvement on last year when they finished 11th, their worst position since 1991.

Marseille failed to break down a spirited Lyon side in a 0-0 draw on Friday, but nevertheless extended its lead at the top of the French league after its nearest rival, Bordeaux, lost 1-0 at home to Monaco.

Marseille, which moved two points clear at the top with three games to go, had several chances to break the deadlock, but strikers Titi Camara and Christophe Dugarry were both guilty of glaring misses.

In the 5th minute, Camara, reportedly set to join England's Liverpool, sliced wide a cross from Robert Pires. On 32 minutes he was alone at the far post only for a cross to go straight through his legs.

In the second half, Marseille kept up the pressure on third-placed Lyon, and Dugarry put a header fractionally wide on 53 minutes. Five minutes later, the French international completely missed a point-blank header.

Bordeaux, trailing Marseille by one point before Friday's matches, failed to capitalize, going down to a first half strike by Monaco striker Sabri Lamouchi on 30

minutes.

Lamouchi chipped two oncoming defenders and scored with a spectacular half-volley from the edge of the area.

Earlier, Monaco striker David Trezeguet had a header well-saved. It was Bordeaux's second successive defeat.

The victory put Monaco in fourth place and well in the running for a place in European competition next season.

In other action, Lorient thrashed fellow struggler Toulouse 4-1 away from home to give them hope of avoiding the drop.

Ali Bouafia scored twice in 12 minutes in the second half, the other goals coming from Patrice Loko and Pascal Camadini. Toulouse's Ahmed Maherzi had put his side fleetingly ahead with a 43rd minute strike.

Bayern Munich had a scare on the weekend when brilliant keeper Oliver Kahn was red-carded.

But Munich, showing the strain and fatigue of chasing a historic triple, fought back with 10 men from 2-1 down against Moenchengladbach when striker Alexander Zickler struck in the 68th and 69th minute.

"Our energy was dwindling and you don't think this thing can be pulled out," said Zickler. "Then the double strike — unbelievable."

Munich went on to win 4-2, pulling 10 points clear in the table against Leverkusen, which drew 2-2 with third-place Hertha Berlin. There are just five rounds remaining in the league season.

"We've got five matches left — but I say that's it," said Munich midfielder Mario Basler of the title race.

Leverkusen, which had chopped seven points off the Bavarian lead in just 10 days, twice let leads slip away in a 2-2 draw against third-place Hertha Berlin.

Afterwards, Leverkusen's players admitted they had one eye on the stadium scoreboard as it appeared Munich was in trouble.

Kahn was ejected after fouling Swedish striker Joergen Petterson in the penalty area, then kicking the ball in frustration into the stands following Toni Polster's conversion.

Moenchengladbach's 1-0 lead was leveled by a powerful Basler free kick, but Petterson scored again in the 54th minute by fooling tired-looking Munich national team defenders Jens Jeremies and Markus Babbel.

Munich spent most of the match trying to stop cellar-dweller Moenchengladbach from scoring until Basler



Hamburg's former Leeds star Tony Yeboah scored as they beat Kaiserslautern 1-0 on Saturday in the Bundesliga. Here he is against Ibrahim.

threaded a pass through two defenders to Zickler in the 68th minute.

Zickler turned and fired the equalizer, then 30 seconds later struck again on a Moenchengladbach defensive lapse. Mehmet Scholl added Munich's last goal in the 84th minute.

Munich, barring a league collapse, now only has to win the final of both the Champions Cup and the German Cup to complete its historic treble for a German

among the top German teams just two years after promotion, roared back with a Jens Novotny own goal of a deflected shot and defender Hendrik Herzog's 50th minute equalizer.

"If I wasn't coach of Leverkusen, I would say the match was extraordinary entertainment," said a breathless Christoph Daum.

After VfL Bochum was beaten 2-0 on Friday in the Bundesliga, angry fans of the demotion-threatened



Bayern's Alex Zickler (right) saved his side from defeat with two goals against M/Gladbach to end up winning 3-2. Zickler said later he did not believe they could come back.

side.

In other matches, Wolfsburg all but wrapped up a UEFA Cup berth when striker Roy Praeger's goal lifted the team to a 3-2 victory against Stuttgart.

Germany's Swiss-born national team striker, Oliver Neuville, had a hat trick as Rostock routed 1860 Munich 4-1. Fading Kaiserslautern, the defending champions, fell into fifth with a 2-0 loss to Hamburg.

On Friday, SC Freiburg beat Frankfurt 2-0 and Nuremberg routed Bochum 3-0 in two relegation battles.

U.S. national team player Tony Sanneh made his debut for Berlin against Leverkusen, entering in the 83rd minute of a wide-open match.

With both sides parading some high-class stuff Leverkusen twice went up by Carsten Ramelow and Brazilian Emerson.

But ambitious Berlin, intent on proving it belongs

club pelted police and security officers with stones and other objects.

The Bochum fans shouted for the players to appear after the loss, which left the club in 15th place, calling them "losers" and tried to break into the club's business offices.

The police said they got the angry fans under control quickly, but did not say how many people were involved or if there were arrests.

Followers of Bochum, which faces its third trip to the second division within six years, also waved signs during the match from the stands saying "management out."

Bochum played in international competition, the UEFA Cup, just 16 months ago.



Fernando Redondo (white shirt) of Real against Espanol in the Spanish Primera The team in white won 2-0.

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UK

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WASTE OF TIME!

The English tabloids, while still loving King Kev, were not impressed by the England 'B' side that represented the national team in a meaningless 1-1 friendly draw with Hungary, on a night when Scotland and Ireland both had terrific wins ahead of their Euro 2000 qualifiers.

There were so many new faces that it was more like a training game. Kevin Keegan noted new boy, Sunderland's Michael Gray's ability as a potential left wing-back, which gave a new impetus to England's usually sparse left side when he came on in place of Brown, with Keegan switching Phil Neville from left-back to right.

Shearer executed a textbook penalty after 22 minutes that could have been performed on the training ground.

That was appropriate because this friendly in the Nep Stadium was no more than a workout for a number of England hopefuls, one or two possibles and only a smattering of probables.

A wickedly curling 30-yard free-kick from Janos Hrukta ruined Seaman's 50th appearance for his country, which he must have thought he would be celebrating with a clean sheet after a couple of outstanding saves.

The spine of this makeshift side was still hugely experienced, and they deserved a draw in the only friendly of the four matches which Keegan initially accepted responsibility for.

Of course, it is now no secret that Keegan has caught the bug of being in charge and is likely to remain so.

It is a measure of Keegan's motivational prowess that even this shadow England team at least kept their shape and spirit, although for the most part it was a pointless exercise.

The cynical would question the validity of such a fixture — noting that it coincided with the launch of Umbro's new kit and British Telecom sponsorship.

Of course, by sheer coincidence, it also coincided with the hype of Hungary's 2004 European Championship bid at a time when the FA are seeking support for their own 2006 World Cup bid.

Even the concept of donating the players' match fees was an afterthought, put to Keegan by those desperately seeking some sort of interesting headlines for a non-event.

Then the FA decided to match the players' £25,000 appearance fees to present to the Kosovo refugees. More "collective conscious" than collective responsibility.

The total of the players' donation amounts to one superstar's weekly wage packet.

There were flowers presented to suitably embarrassed England players before the kick-off, parachutists landing on the centre-spot as the pre-match entertainment.

The show must go on. Never mind the war zone just down the road.

But there is no denying Keegan's genuine enthusiasm. He is the best cheerleader this country has ever possessed.

And if anyone can find any virtue in this fixture then Keegan can.

In other friendlies ... Two goals in two minutes gave Mick McCarthy's Irish side a stunning victory over high-flying Sweden.

Debutant Graham Kavanagh hit the first in the 75th minute and Mark Kennedy scored the second in this friendly at Lansdowne Road.

Unbeaten in their previous nine games and with a 100 per cent record from four Euro 2000 games, the Swedes looked well organised and restricted the Irish forwards to few goal chances for most of the game.



Shearer shoots in Hungary. The 1-1 draw was greeted with much skepticism.

But David Connolly had a great chance just before the break, only for Swedish goalkeeper Magnus Kihlstedt to block his shot.

Manchester United's Jesper Blomqvist fired wide for the Swedes while Quinn shot into the side netting for the Irish early in the second half.

Celtic's Henrik Larsson, the top scorer in Scottish soccer, also had a second-half chance but shot straight at keeper Shay Given.

Then Kavanagh broke the deadlock. He took a pass from Tony Cascarino after a cross by winger Kevin Kilbane and scored with a fiercely-hit shot in the 75th minute.

Two minutes later Kennedy struck the second with a low shot.

And over in Germany, Scotland secured a famous victory in Bremen, thanks to Gateshead-born Don Hutchison.

ANELKA'S NIGHTCLUB VISIT CAUSES STORM

Nicolas Anelka has been forced to apologise for not making the award ceremony for Young Player of the Year. He won it, yet he was at a Mayfair nightclub.

Arsenal's French striker spent Sunday night partying rather than receive the accolade, voted by his fellow professionals, at the Grosvenor House Hotel just a few minutes walk away.

Highbury chairman Peter Hill-Wood and managing director Ken Friar held emergency talks with Anelka at the club's Hertfordshire training ground yesterday and forced him to speak out.

"I would like to pass on my apologies to the PFA for not attending the ceremony on Sunday evening," Anelka said in a statement.

"Unfortunately, I was not aware of the full significance of this award and I am sorry for any misunderstanding, upset or ill-feeling it may have caused.

"It is a great honour for me to receive this highly-regarded accolade and I would now like to take the opportunity to thank my fellow professionals for voting for me."

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger was forced to pick up the award in his absence while midfield stars Emmanuel Petit, Patrick Vieira and Chelsea's French duo Marcel Desailly and Frank Leboeuf also snubbed the prestigious ceremony.

Aussie Kevin Muscat is not the only one in trouble for injuring a fellow player. Watford defender Paul Robinson could face legal action after his tackle left Port Vale's Stewart Talbot with a shattered leg.

Midfield hardman Talbot writhed in agony with his leg broken in two places after Robinson flew in with a sickening challenge after referee George Cain had blown to stop play for a free-kick to Graham Taylor's side in Vale's 2-1 defeat midweek.

Furious Vale chairman Bill Bell said: "It was a vicious tackle and something must be done about it." And still on injuries, Pierluigi Casiraghi has undergone his sixth major operation in a bid to play again.

Surgery was necessary to try to regain flexibility in his right knee after the horrific injury sustained at West Ham last November.

The delicate surgery took place in Bologna on Monday at the clinic where Chelsea's record £5.4 million signing has been undergoing intense rehabilitation work.

It is unclear when he will be able to return to the Bologna clinic to continue his rehabilitation.



Nicolas Anelka ... nightclubs was put before picking up an award. Sensible lad.

MP Tony Banks has provoked uproar by calling for a united British soccer team to ensure World Cup success.

The Sports Minister believes the only chance of bringing the trophy back to British soil is if the likes of Ryan Giggs, Alan Shearer and Colin Hendry are in the same side.

Banks stressed the initiative was a personal view, but it still received a hostile reception when he made the call in Edinburgh.

Scottish FA president Jack McGinn said: "There's no evidence to suggest there is any support in the home countries for a Britain team."

Banks argued: "FIFA president Sepp Blatter is talking about the possibility of a British team in the Olympics and I'd love to see that."

"In the World Cup, Scotland have a fabulous qualifying record, but they have never get past the first round and England consistently fail to find that extra push. As Britain they would win it."

Wonder what the fans of each country would feel about this? Perhaps Tony should stick to politics.

ODE TO A DEVILISHLY GOOD SIDE



Soccer Spice was so impressed by Man Utd's Turin triumph that the little sexpot (pictured right), has written her own acknowledgment of the team with Mr Beckham and Co. ...

Manchester United — what a phenomenal team! Bringing constant success to the theatre of dreams, but don't write them off, if 'away' they should go, for they beat Juve in Turin, surely you know? The two goals to Inzaghi, was an upsetting start one would have thought they would fall apart. But the Red Devils continued with fire and strength, they would reach the champions league final, at any length! Then with Keane's header, some hope was restored all was not lost, for Man Utd had scored!

With one more, they realised, the game could be won, and deservedly Yorke pulled back another one. The two-all draw would be enough to see them through, but this isn't just any team — this is Man U!

A chance to claim victory, to Irwin did fall, but instead the post was found by the ball. That's not to say that a

chance to seal victory, Juve did lack for the second half saw them look dangerous in attack.

Schmeichel and his defenders though, had it all under control, they would not allow Juve to penetrate their goal.

Then in the 80th minute, victory was claimed, Yorke broke through and could not be tamed, though Peruzzi tried, United had only one mission to get the ball past the line and gain pole position.

So with Yorke on the ground and loud penalty cries, that man Cole, to the occasion did rise. He clinically put the ball into the back of the net, a moment the Juve fans would rather forget.

And now in Barcelona, United will meet, German team Bayern Munich, who are no easy beat. With an FA Cup final and premiership title to play for as well, it seems the Old Trafford trophy cabinet will surely swell. But just what will happen cannot be said, I just hope that victory goes to those in the Red!

UK WITH CRAZY CRAIG WILSON



to have disappeared in Britain, namely smuggling bizarre items into football grounds.

'During those heady days, we were up for almost anything for a laugh', says Haynes. 'A good mate of mine bet me on the way to a game that I couldn't get a shopping trolley into the ground. We had already managed to get twenty kippers into Luton, and two deckchairs into Bristol

City.'

Heady days indeed. Chelsea supporters were once banned from taking celery into Stamford Bridge, and QPR fans were under a newspaper prohibition.

Both, argued the Plod, could be used as offensive weapons. We at the Crazy office aim to revive the tradition, and will be smuggling two jars of sauerkraut, a Mini Minor, a set of golf clubs and the Fijian rugby sevens team into Bossley Park with us this weekend.

Our office lackey Zbigniew got one over on us yesterday. 'Who played against his teacher in last summer's World Cup,' he asked.

The answer was Batty and Batistuta. With that kind of logic he'll go a long way in this office!

One of the best fanzines we've seen is *The Gooner* [BCM Box 7499, London WC1N 3XX, England]. Their running spat with the genius that is Ginola has now erupted into song. In the current issue Alister Campbell, the Bard of Blackheath, penned the following ode in his honour, to the tune of 'London Bridge.'

Did he fall over a blade of grass

Blade of grass, blade of grass

Did he fall over a blade of grass

Poor old David

Was he practicing his double pike

Double pike, double pike

Or was it a triple salcho

Poor old David

It goes on (and on) but you get the picture. Interestingly, tucked away on page 40 is a statistic that reveals that Ginola is in fact the most fouled player in the premiership, 'which just goes to show how many refs fall for his acting' says 'The Gooner'; rather uncharitably.

The Gunners' own Ray Parlour is

We're also indebted to *The Gooner* for the following joke. We won't tell you who it was aimed at, but surprisingly it wasn't Tottenham. We supply it solely as a public service, and you may find it useful. Just insert the name of your least favourite team.

A ***** fan goes to the barbers for a haircut. The barber showed him to



Marc Overmars ... the Gooner is one of the cleanest players in the league.

the fifth most often fouled say the figures, and Marc Overmars is one of the cleanest players in the Premiership, 'having committed only seven fouls in 1845 minutes on the pitch.'

David's Mum is getting pretty upset at seeing her gifted young lad chopped from behind by the likes of Martin Keown. 'When he is sad, I too am unhappy.'

She says, 'It's then I say to him: "Even when the skies are grey and everything seems black around you, David, tell yourself the sun is in your heart. Close your eyes and tell yourself you have a superb life."

Our advice to David? Open your wallet and look at the crinkly green stuff David. \$50 000 a week! That's enough to put the sun in anyone's heart.

the chair and said 'Right sir, sit down and I'll give you a smart trim. But you'll have to take off your headphones first.'

'Can't do that' the ***** fan replies. 'But I can't do it with you wearing them', says the barber.

'Please, do the best you can. It's really important that I keep the headphones on,' pleaded the supporter.

The barber did as he was asked, and when he was finished the youth got up out of the chair, catching the headphone lead as he did so.

They were pulled from his head, and he fell stone dead on the floor. The barber could do nothing to help, and feeling that the walkman had something to do with the youth's demise, he picked up the headphones, but all he heard was 'Breathe in ... Breathe out ... Breathe in ... Breathe out ...'

Email **Crazy Craig** at magic sponge@hotmail.com



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Soccer Weekly

GEORDIES TARGET THE GUV FOR NEW SEASON

Promoted Sunderland and Middlesbrough want the Guy Paul Ince to run their respective midfields next season.

Speaking on TV, Reid noted the difficulties he will face.

"I don't think it's as easy as: 'we'll have all these out and all these in'.

"Good players are difficult to find and competition to sign them is immense."

The general consensus is that Sunderland must sign quality players to avoid yet another soul destroying drop.

The current squad, while clearly good enough for the First Division, lacks the star quality and experience of Premier league sides.

But with Anfield chief Gerard Houllier preparing for a massive rebuilding programme, both Reid and Boro boss Bryan Robson know this could be the best time to move in for the former Inter Milan and England hardman.

And former Liverpool manager Roy Evans has slagged off current boss Gerard Houllier, claiming that the difference between the academic and management side of coaching is very big.

"It's very difficult," said Evans. "The job he came from, director of football in France, is massive. He must take great credit for their World Cup win."

"On the academic side Gerard is fantastic. But Gerard really has to prove he's got the professional side as well as the academic side to take Liverpool forward. Football



Paul Ince ... being wooed by two North East clubs.

is not about the academic side. It's all about the playing side."

Evans served the Merseyside club for nearly 40 years and has every reason to be angry and confused about events at Anfield which saw him undermined and then sacked, despite a record second only to Alex Ferguson's at Manchester United.

He has still to be given his pay-off, six months after his tearful departure from the club he joined as a boy.

KEEGAN GETS THE TASTE FOR THE JOB



Kevin Keegan is odds on to become the next and permanent England coach. The FA are in negotiations with him and it only seems a matter of time before he gets the job officially, despite his earlier statements about staying loyal to Fulham.

Although the small print of the contract has still to be settled, it is understood that the FA is ready to offer him a four-year contract at £1m a year — three times what Hoddle earned and in line with top Premiership managers currently employed.

Senior figures at Lancaster Gate hope the deal will be signed in the next 10 days and are certain it will be in place by the time Keegan picks his squad for the Euro 2000 qualifiers against Sweden and Bulgaria in June.

The FA's acting chairman Geoff Thompson was in

particularly ebullient mood at the successful conclusion to the drawn-out courtship.

The only questions to be answered now are the precise terms of Keegan's disentanglement from Fulham. Thompson said: "Things aren't finalised by any means yet, but I would like to confirm everything before June."

Thompson and his colleagues were criticised over Keegan's initial appointment as a part-time caretaker manager in February but he added: "We always believed Kevin was the right man for the job and that he

wouldn't be able to walk away from England.

At the time we needed somebody who could lift the team quickly to give us a chance of qualifying for Euro 2000.

Our policy was to take things slowly with Kevin. We felt that if he got the taste and was reasonably successful he would want to do it long-term.

Once he is committed to the task, as it appears he is, then it makes our job much easier.

As Keegan said recently: "My heart tells me to take it and that's what I've got to let be my judge."

"The chance that it probably wouldn't come round again is another reason."

And while England's press and supporters give him the support he deserves, the job will be a dream for this most popular of characters.

WAGES BLOWOUT IN PREMIER LEAGUE

Gianluca Vialli's Chelsea picked up pounds 27million this season. That made Chelsea the highest-paying club in Britain, according to a report by accountants Deloitte and Touche. It was an increase of 81% on last season's bill despite them not winning anything this year.

These wage bills are threatening to cripple some Premiership clubs, with many top players demanding more than pounds 20,000 a week, according to the report.

At the very top level however, players can command double that, with Newcastle striker Duncan Ferguson copping pounds 40,000 a week and Chelsea defender Marcel Desailly, Liverpool striker Robbie Fowler and Alan Shearer collecting pounds 35,000.

Below them there are several players on pounds 30,000 a week, including Dennis Bergkamp, Paul Ince and Gianluca Vialli.

The report said these wages were part of an upward trend for individual players which has seen wages rocket by an average of 40 per cent.

While Chelsea's total wage bill led the way, Manchester United were second with pounds 26.9m, Liverpool paid out pounds 24.1m and Newcastle players collected pounds 22.3m.

The report said: "These sorts of salaries make even the fat cats of the City look decidedly slim."

The four biggest payers in football splashed out pounds 100.3m and, with Liverpool languishing outside the European places, it shows that money does not necessarily buy success.

Chelsea have won nothing this season, although at least they are on the verge of a place in the Champions' League as compensation. Over at Old Trafford, however, the players earn pounds 26.9m and are in line for a Premiership, FA Cup and European Cup treble.

The massive influx of overseas players commanding huge salaries was

also listed as one of the major reasons behind the wage explosion.

Soccer's biggest earners now command upwards of pounds 50,000 a week. Steve McManaman is leaving Liverpool for Real Madrid on the Bosman ruling for a reported pounds 60,000 a week.

It is only a matter of time before the top earner in this country will be on pounds 100,000 a week — pounds 5.2m a year.

The total wage bill for the Premiership in the 1997-98 season was three-and-a-half times higher than in 1992-93 — its first year.

PFA chief executive Gordon Taylor rejected the accusations of greed among his members.

He said: "The fact is that these wages are paid by the clubs in the demand for success and the game has never enjoyed as much income from gate receipts, television and sponsorship in particular.

"If the game is hoping to try and attract the best players from all over the world, it is inevitable that they must offer the best wages, and that will include other players in the team who don't want to be left too far behind."

"There is this emphasis on the top level and the demand to stay in the Premiership."

"Every labourer is worth his hire and it is not as if the player is putting



And you want us to win something?

the club's arm up its back. It is up to clubs to balance budgets and it is only fair that players should share in the income the game is getting."

But Taylor is wary of clubs "over-reaching" in the relentless charge for the top flight. "The only problem is that because of the gap in distribution of income, we see problems with clubs in the First Division, where they are attempting to keep pace," Taylor said.

Compiled and written by

Daryl Katz

UK

Premier League highlights

COVENTRY V WIMBLEDON

Coventry City took a big step towards premiership survival on Saturday with a 2-1 victory over fast-fading Wimbledon at Highfield Road.

The much-needed win ended a run of three successive defeats for the Sky Blues who have been hovering precariously over the relegation zone.

Gordon Strachan will have been heartened by a rampant display, at least for the opening 74 minutes, until Wimbledon staged a late rally which nearly brought them a point.

Coventry started in determined fashion and were rewarded for their swift attacking play with two well-crafted goals, Dutch midfielder George Boateng the architect.

Boateng's first pass was sublime, an inch-perfect 60-yard diagonal ball which fell into the path of Darren Huckerby in the 17th minute. From his position just inside the left-hand edge of the penalty area, Huckerby deftly beat advancing keeper Neil Sullivan with a superb flick.

The goal ended the striker's 14-match drought stretching back to mid-January. The second delivery from Boateng was less breathtaking but just as incisive.

S'TON V LEICESTER

Another relegation-haunted side, Southampton, maintained their chance of survival as well as their impressive recent home record when they secured a vital 2-1 win over in-form Leicester City.

Southampton deserved their victory after recovering from a shaky start to dominate the second half.

Leicester took the lead in the 17th minute. Neil Lennon crossed from the left and Ian Marshall got ahead of his marker Jason Dodd to send a powerful header wide of goalkeeper Neil Moss.

Leicester looked as if they might overwhelm Southampton as Tony Cottie, Steve Guppy and Rob Savage all went close, with Moss doing well to block Savage's shot when a goal seemed inevitable.

Southampton-born Guppy posed problems for the Saints down the left before Dave Jones moved Dodd to right back, from which time Guppy was not quite the same force and Southampton began to take control.

Dodd was instrumental in the equaliser after 36 minutes, racing down the right and crossing with his left foot to the penalty spot where midfielder Chris Marsden finished with a strong header.



Matt le Tissier is the key to Southampton's survival

Southampton were again exposed in the 40th minute by a long kick downfield from Kasey Keller. Cottie raced clear of the defence but Moss timed his intervention superbly to prevent a second Leicester goal.

The second half belonged to Southampton. Hassan Kachloul and Latvian striker Marian Pahars each went close to scoring a winner, Keller making an exceptional save to turn away a close range header from the Moroccan.

After 74 minutes defender Francis Benali took a free kick in the centre circle. James Beattie met the ball on the left side of the Leicester area, but his intended cross on the volley deceived Keller and drifted in at the far post.

There were further late chances for Kachloul and substitute Egil Ostenstad as Southampton held on for the win and moved out of the relegation zone.

Survival this season would be a minor miracle, but Saints have thrown themselves a lifeline and may well now stay up unless Blackburn Rovers can get something from their game in hand against Manchester United.

RELEGATION BATTLES

Nottingham Forest secured their first home win in eight months with a 2-0 victory over struggling Sheffield Wednesday on Saturday.

Two goals in three minutes in the first half saw Ron Atkinson's side take full points, the relief obvious in spite of the fact that Forest are already doomed to relegation.

Portuguese international Hugo Porsirio opened the scoring in the 14th minute, and before Wednesday had been able to gather their composure, a deflected shot by Alan Rogers produced a second goal.

It was no more than Forest deserved for their brightest start to a game this season, and although Wednesday had their moments in the second half, Forest did not have many scares.

The major threat to the home side was a penalty by Benito Carbone that was brilliantly saved by Mark Crossley early in the second half.

That inspired Forest to hang on for the win and leave Sheffield Wednesday still unsure of a place in the premiership next season.

Charlton Athletic and Blackburn Rovers produced a goalless draw at The Valley on Saturday, a result which does little to help either side in the battle against relegation.

Charlton's best efforts came from Swedish international Martin Pringle and the returning Neil Redfearn.

The nearest that Rovers came to a goal was when a Jason Wilcox header crashed against the bar just before half time after Pringle had applied a crucial deflection. However, there was little difference between the sides in a frantic 90 minutes.

Blackburn might have had a penalty when striker Ashley Ward went sprawling between substitute goalkeeper Andy Petterson and defender Carl Tiler, but referee Gary Willard waved play on.

Blackburn would hardly have deserved to win just a second game in 13 matches as the home side were slightly the more inventive although they lacked a cutting edge.

Both sides are now in deep trouble at the wrong end of the table, although Rovers have a game in hand.

NEWCASTLE V M'BORO

At St James Park, Alan Shearer's 21st goal of the season saw Newcastle grab a share of the points in a local derby against Middlesbrough.

The Magpies had to come from behind despite dominating the game for long periods.

Boro seemed happy to sit back and soak up the pressure, and that policy proved the correct one on the hour. A swift counter-attack saw Alun Armstrong slip the ball through for Robbie Mustoe, who gave his side the lead against the run of play.

Newcastle were back on level terms within three minutes after Robbie Stockdale lunged at Didier Domi inside the box and referee Mike Reed pointed to the spot. Shearer blasted the penalty past Mark Schwarzer to set

up a grandstand finish.

It was all Newcastle as the clock ticked down, Gary Pallister rescuing Schwarzer after the keeper blasted a clearance straight at Shearer from point-blank range. Shearer then saw his header fly narrowly wide.

Substitute Temuri Ketsbaia, replacing Duncan Ferguson on 63 minutes, went close with a speculative chip, and Steve Vickers got in front of Shearer as the striker looked certain to head home Nolberto Solano's cross.

United were left to rue their missed chances however, and have now taken only three points from their last four premiership games.



Alan Shearer and the players pause in remembrance of the death of Sir Alf Ramsey before the game... The Newcastle captain led Newcastle to a 1-1 draw with rivals Middlesbrough after scoring from the penalty spot.

WEST HAM V LEEDS

Leeds secured their berth in Europe next season with a 5-1 rout of eight-man West Ham United at Upton Park on Saturday.

Leeds took a first-minute lead when Alfie Haaland found Jimmy-Floyd Hasselbaink unmarked 20 yards out and the Dutchman coolly curled his shot beyond goalkeeper Shaka Hislop to give the visitors a flying start.

In the 17th minute, Ian Wright was dismissed for a second bookable offence and from then on the Hammers were always fighting a losing battle.

Alan Smith made it 2-0 in first-half injury time, tapping home after Harry Kewell's weaving run, and Leeds were firmly in the driving seat.

Hammers fans vented their fury on referee Harris, who had dished out six first-half bookings and had to be escorted from the field.

Paolo Di Canio threw his side a lifeline when he

pulled a goal back after a mazy run by Eyal Berkovic, but Leeds ended the match as a contest in the 63rd minute.

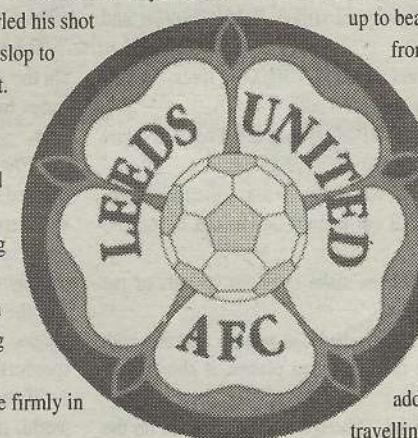
Hislop was dismissed for bringing down Hasselbaink when the Leeds striker was clear and Ian Harte stepped up to beat substitute goalkeeper Craig Forrest from the spot to make it 3-1.

Di Canio kept his head up and almost pulled a goal back seconds later, Nigel Martyn saving at his near post.

However, when Bowyer added the fourth with a blistering drive about which Forrest knew little, West Ham were finished.

Haaland twisted the knife by adding a fifth to the delight of the travelling fans before Steve Lomas became the third Hammers player to see red.

The Leeds victory sets up an intriguing clash with third-placed Chelsea next week, David O'Leary's men hoping to overhaul the London side and claim fourth place in the premiership and a Champions League slot.



Compiled and written by

Daryl Katz

UK

Premier League Highlights

LIVERPOOL V TOTTENHAM

Liverpool finally provided the Anfield faithful with something to celebrate as they came back from two goals down to secure a 3-2 victory over Tottenham Hotspur on Saturday.

Steve McManaman bounced back from a disappointing performance for England in midweek to inspire his side to an amazing recovery.

The opening 45 minutes were frustrating for Liverpool, Jamie Carragher at fault for both Tottenham goals.

After 13 minutes, the Liverpool defender could only poke a Steffen Iversen cross between Brad Friedel's legs with Chris Armstrong threatening. Then, ten minutes from the break, Carragher sent a misguided clearance straight to Jose Dominguez who raced goalwards before Bjorn Tore Kvarme was forced into a rash challenge.

Darren Anderton sent the resulting free-kick accurately towards Iversen who only needed to touch the ball to make it 2-0.

With David Ginola and Tim Sherwood left on the bench, Tottenham still looked comfortable against a home side lacking in confidence and struggling to penetrate without strikers Robbie Fowler and Michael Owen.

However, Liverpool had a crucial slice of luck just two minutes from the interval when Spurs defender Mauricio Taricco was dismissed for a seemingly innocuous challenge on McManaman.

Four minutes into the second period, the home side brought themselves back into the game.

Dominic Matteo played the ball through to Karl-Heinz Riedle, and as Ian Walker raced from his line the German fell to the floor under the resulting challenge. Jamie Redknapp stepped up to convert the spot-kick.

Liverpool's confidence soared and Ince went close with a drive in the 52nd minute, while Redknapp might

have equalised on the hour but saw his drive from Steve Staunton's corner deflected away from goal.

On 76 minutes, McManaman stepped up to bring some cheer to the Anfield fans. He won a corner before finding Redknapp, who played the ball into the area where Ince glanced it beyond Walker for the equaliser.

Two minutes later, McManaman put Liverpool ahead. Collecting a cross from substitute Rigobert Song on the edge of the area, the Spain-bound player curled the ball around Walker to send the Kop into raptures.



Paul Ince got Liverpool back into the game with the equaliser.

MAN UTD V VILLA

Manchester United failed to produce a performance of characteristic fluency at Old Trafford on Saturday, but fought hard to secure a 2-1 victory over early season pacesetters Aston Villa.

In the absence of several regulars, including Roy Keane, Ryan Giggs and Jaap Stam, England midfielder David Beckham took the responsibility of guiding the home side to three more vital points.

The match began in frantic fashion. United were denied a penalty inside the first minute after a foul on Paul Scholes by Colin Calderwood and seconds later Peter Schmeichel saved at the feet of Villa midfielder Ian Taylor.

Three minutes into the match, Scholes and Teddy Sheringham both had shots charged down by desperate Villa defending in a goalmouth scramble. A minute later, Sheringham cut a Blomqvist cross back into the path of Scholes, but he headed straight at Villa goalkeeper Michael Oakes from close range.

Former United striker Dion Dublin then sent a volley high from long range before Nicky Butt drove a 20-yard shot straight at Oakes.

In the 14th minute, Dwight Yorke, clear on the left, cut the ball back for Swede Jesper Blomqvist who saw his shot deflected wide. United failed to press home the advantage from the ensuing corner, allowing Villa to clear in another goalmouth scramble.

The home side came close to opening the scoring on 18 minutes when Beckham sent a 20-yard free kick soaring over the defensive wall and towards the top corner. Villa captain Gareth Southgate had intelligently dropped back to cover the post though, and headed the ball off the line.

United did take the lead just two minutes later. Blomqvist sent over a teasing far post cross and when Scholes cut it back across the face of goal, Villa defender Steve Watson could do no more than usher the ball across the line under pressure from former Villa man Yorke.

United seemed into their stride by now and two minutes later a Beckham cross to the near post was met by Scholes but his effort flew just wide.

A minute later Villa threatened briefly, but United broke into the resulting space and Yorke almost found Sheringham before Irwin drove a shot across goal and wide.

The home side were in control at this stage, imposing their passing game as they probed patiently for another opening.

However, despite plenty of possession, United struggled to find a decisive final ball. With Beckham finding acres of space down the right and Blomqvist threatening down the left, too many crosses simply provided Oakes with catching practice.

The home side came to regret this inaccuracy after 33 minutes, as Villa grabbed the equaliser against the run of play.

Surviving a United appeal for offside, Steve Stone crossed from the right and Julian Joachim nipped in at the near post to wrong-foot Schmeichel and finish from close range.

The goal unsettled United and they looked uneasy in the minutes following the equaliser, although Sheringham almost doubled their lead in the dying seconds of the half. Unleashing a rasping 20-yard shot on the run, he forced a fine save from Oakes, the goalkeeper going full stretch to his right.



Sheringham gets past Villa's Steve Watson.

Alex Ferguson must have had plenty to say at the interval, and the second half had been underway for less than two minutes when Beckham provided a contender for goal of the season.

Standing over a free kick fully 30 yards out and well right of centre, he sent the ball curling wickedly across the face of goal and narrowly inside the far post with Oakes rooted to the spot.

Five minutes later, Sheringham made a jinking run at the Villa defence and the ball eventually broke for Scholes who could only send his powerful low shot well wide.

Just before the hour, Mark Draper attempted to emulate Beckham with an 18-yard free-kick, but saw it flash wide.

On 65 minutes United were handed a glorious opportunity to extend their lead when Stone was adjudged to have tripped substitute Philip Neville in the area. Irwin stepped up to take the spot-kick, but Oakes made a spectacular diving one-handed save to deny United a match-winning lead.

From the resulting corner, Beckham crossed for Scholes, but he could not force his header on target.

The penalty save seemed to galvanise Villa, and they began to string together flowing moves to test the United defence.

For all their efforts, they could not fashion clear goalscoring opportunities, but they did cause enough concern to force Ferguson into a defensive change as he replaced the tiring David May with Wes Brown eleven minutes from time.

Villa continued to press for the equaliser, causing several uneasy moments for United in a nervous finish. The tension could be felt even in the crowd as United battled to hold their lead for the remainder of the game.

Just a minute from time, panic in the United area saw Irwin hook the ball wildly behind for a corner under pressure from Villa substitute Darius Vassell.

But United are a resilient side, particularly in their 'theatre of dreams', and with Beckham appearing all over the pitch, they managed to hold out for the win.

A wonder goal and a man-of-the-match performance from the tireless Beckham ensured a hard-earned United victory. While they maintained their advantage in the title race, Ferguson knows that his side must improve on this performance over the final weeks of the season, beginning with a daunting trip to Anfield on Wednesday.



David Beckham and Dwight Yorke celebrate after Beckham scored the winner against Villa.

CHELSEA V EVERTON

Chelsea kept alive their dream of Champions League football next season as they produced a confident display to defeat Everton 3-1 at Stamford Bridge.

Seemingly free from the pressure which had hindered their flowing football in recent weeks, the home side tore Everton apart in the first half.

An early Graeme Le Saux cross was turned over by Gustavo Poyet as Everton defended desperately. David Unsworth then threw himself in front of a fierce Dennis Wise volley to deflect it over and he saved his team again with a tackle on Gianfranco Zola after the Italian had been found inside the area by Wise.

Chelsea peppered Thomas Myhre's goal from all angles but he preserved a clean sheet until the 25th minute when Zola struck.

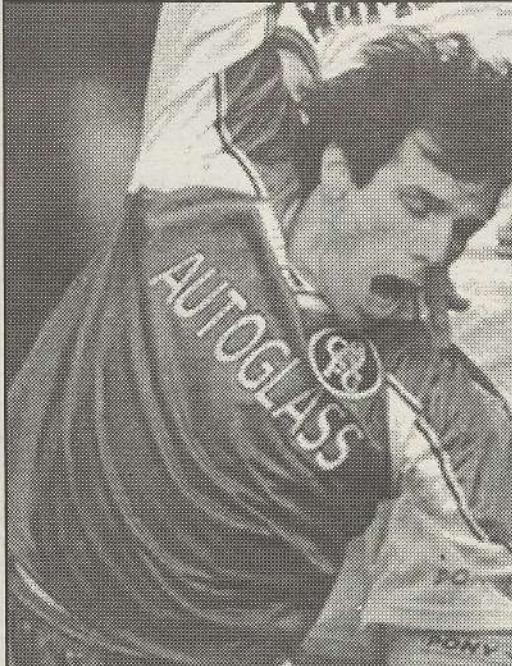
The move started in midfield where Poyet dispossessed Mitch Ward and released Le Saux down the left. The England full-back lifted the ball towards Zola and the striker duly secured his 14th goal of the season.

Wise then threaded a ball through for Dan Petrescu but Myhre was off his line quickly to block the shot with his body.

A Zola snap-shot flashed over before the break and twice the visitors managed to scramble the ball clear from beneath their own crossbar.

Everton improved after the interval. Teenager Francis Jeffers had a glimpse of goal when he latched onto a ball forced through the Chelsea defence by Ward, but Franck Leboeuf produced a superb tackle.

The home side made it two on the hour when Myhre failed to hold a Leboeuf drive.



Gianfranco Zola scored two in the win over Everton. Chelsea still have an outside chance of winning the league.

Jeffers pounced.

The 18-year-old collected the ball midway inside the Chelsea half, charged goalward unchallenged and finished clinically past the static Ed De Goey.

Vialli's team surrendered a two-goal lead in their last game at Stamford Bridge, but this time the goal spurred Chelsea on and Zola settled matters with an exquisite free-kick in the 81st minute.



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v
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